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The New Hampshire Gazette

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We Put the Free! in Free Press

The Fortnightly Rant

A Long and Sordid Tradition

Our former—and perhaps our future—president, after being convicted of 34 felonies, submitted to an interview with his probation officer on Monday. Even Nixon was never made to do that.

Ecclesiastes 1:9 says, "…there is no new thing under the sun." Maybe the Bible is fallible after all. Who's going to tell Samuel Alito, Mike Johnson, and the rest of the theocrat caucus?

We can state with confidence that, in our 267 years, we have never before reported on a tossup presidential election in which one of the top candidates is an habitually bankrupt con artist bearing all the hallmarks of dementia, who has been seen on live TV leading an insurrection, and who, given his theft of Top Secret documents, might reasonably be suspected of having committed treason.

So, yes, things are terrible. They could always be worse, though—as anyone who's watched a person-in-the-street interview of late must realize. Imagine if a single juror had tipped the balance, and he'd been found innocent. Unanimous, on all counts, in a case not subject to presidential pardons: let us take comfort from that, because we'll be needing all the comfort we can get.

Now that the Miscreant-in-Chief has been called to account for a few brief excerpts from his multi-volume rap sheet, some members of his cult—who, unfortunately, rule the U.S. House of Representatives—naturally feel entitled to persecute any Democrats who dare try to govern.

Take, for example, Hunter Biden. He's not even in government. His father is, though, so he's fair game by association. For eleven days, he owned a six-shot .38 Special Colt Cobra revolver. If guns were cars, that's a Honda Civic. We have yet to hear any allegations that he ever even fired it at a range, never mind at a Black Lives Matter protestor.

Dangerous to have around

He lied on the paperwork when he bought it, though, and that, in the eyes of the Trump cult, makes him a heinous criminal deserving of the maximum sentence: 25 years in prison.

Meanwhile, for shooting three protesters against police violence in Kenosha, Kyle Rittenhouse became an instant MAGA hero.

Fans of irony got a brief thrill when it looked like the GOP front-runner's felony convictions might cost him one vote this November—his own. Florida law prohibits felons from voting until they've served their full sentence. And yet, and yet…with this guy, it's always, and yet….

Setting aside about a bushel of well-picked-over nits, all he's got to do is not be behind bars on Election Day. Given his track record for eluding justice, that doesn't seem too challenging. If all else fails, perhaps Florida Governor Ron DeSanctimonious will swallow the last vestiges of his pride and make that problem go away.

Pay No Attention to the Man Behind the Invisible Accordion

Any card-carrying MAGAMobster would no doubt by now have diagnosed us with terminal Trump Derangement Syndrome. While it's true that we see no redeeming social value in him, we hardly believe that he's the sole source of all the world's ill. He's more like the worst-ever flare-up of an ancient ailment.

Let us briefly, and seemingly at random, recall the illustrious Thomas C. Durant. In 1856, Durant's Mississippi and Missouri Railroad (M&M) completed the first bridge across the Mississippi River. Shortly afterwards, a steamboat hit the bridge. Steamboat companies sued to have the obstruction dismantled. Durant lawyered up, and a six year legal battle ensued. Durant ended up winning, and his lawyer, Abraham Lincoln, ended up President.

In 1862, Lincoln picked the M&M's Council Bluffs, Iowa location as the eastern end of a proposed transcontinental railroad, to be built by Durant's newly-founded Union Pacific. Congress granted the railroad 100 million acres of public land—an area equivalent to the State of Montana. Aware that such largesse might spark temptation, it limited the number of shares a stockholder might own. Durant blew through that like a locomotive through kleenex.

"Since the government paid for each mile of track laid, Durant overrode his engineers and ordered extra track laid in large oxbows. In the first thirty months, the Union Pacific did not extend further than 40 miles from Omaha, Nebraska. As the federal government was waging the Civil War, Durant avoided its oversight on railroad construction.

"During the Civil War, Durant made a fortune smuggling contraband cotton from the Confederate States with the help of Union General Grenville M. Dodge. When the war ended in 1865, the Union Pacific put extra labor on. It completed nearly two thirds of the transcontinental route. Durant employed Dodge as the chief engineer along the Platte River route.

"One of Durant's biggest coups was the creation of Crédit Mobilier of America. …

—Wikipedia, Thomas C. Durant

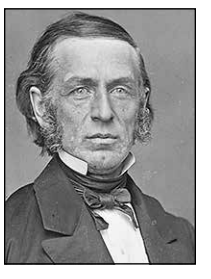
The directors of the Union Pacific (UP) engaged in stock manipulation by paying Crédit Mobilier in bank checks, which Crédit Mobilier then used to purchase Union Pacific stock. In every major construction contract drawn up between the Union Pacific and Crédit Mobilier, the contract's terms, conditions, and price were offered and accepted through the actions of the same corporate officers and directors, operating on both sides of the contract. The underlying fraud of a common and unified ownership of two companies that shared principal officers and directors was not revealed for years.

The deal generated $43,929,328 (equivalent to over $724.9M in 2020) in profits for Crédit Mobilier. The directors reported this as a cash profit of only $23,366,319.81. These same directors were the recipients of the undisclosed $20,563,010 Union Pacific share of the total profits.

—Wikipedia, Crédit Mobilier

The *New York Sun* broke the story on September 4, 1872.

The Justice Department investigated, and determined that more than 30 politicians from both parties had received shares, but filed no charges. Congress investigated 13 current and former Members of Congress; only two were censured. Rep. James A. Garfield was among those on the Justice Department's list. Less than ten years later he was elected President.



Congress found that James W. Patterson, a Senator from New Hampshire, gave Crédit Mobilier official Oakes Ames $7,000 to invest for him. Patterson claimed that since Ames gave him no written receipt, he was unaware that he owned some of the stock. A report to the Senate said that Patterson gave a false testimony to both the House and Senate committees. By this time both the house and the senate were recommending that he be expelled. Patterson's term ended before Congress could've taken further action.

With Friends Like These…

More recently—that is to say, just over a century ago, in January of 1923—President Warren G. Harding and his Director of the Veterans Bureau, Charles R. Forbes, had a frank exchange of views in the White House, *i.e.*, Harding, with his hands around Forbes' throat, was shouting, "You double-crossing bastard!"

Forbes was a fanatic for fiscal discipline when it came to paying out pensions or providing services for veterans. The Bureau's money flowed like water, though, when it went into his own pocket. "I have no trouble with my enemies. I can take care of my enemies in a fight," said Harding. "But my friends, my goddamned friends, they're the ones who keep me walking the floor at nights!"

What Does It All Mean?

The reader may well wonder if we have a point here. To be honest, we sometimes wonder ourselves. The intricate skulduggeries of our elected representatives and their powerful friends have a hypnotic effect. We could contemplate them for hours, like great works of art. We do have fish to fry, though. Let's have done with them before they start to stink up the place.

Our thesis, such as it is, is that today's generation of Durants and Dodges and Ameses need the same things that those 19th century OGs did—cooperative allies in government willing to put policies in place that will provide them with opportunities to maximize value for shareholders—who, in these days of massive stock buybacks, are likely to be themselves.

In April, 1912, President and future Supreme Court Justice William Howard Taft called for the creation of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. He said the "government needed to deal with a group that could speak with authority for the interests of business." And bingo—there it was.

Sixty years later, future Supreme Court Justice Lewis Powell wrote an historic memo to said U.S. Chambers of Commerce. Powell's memo called for the creation of what turned out to be the Heritage Foundation. It, and similar propaganda mills, and a coordinated national crusade, were needed, Powell said, to defend the dwindling rights of the beleaguered rich from those uppity damned union workers. We paraphrase, of course.

Powell's memo catalyzed the previously dog-eat-dog world of business. CEOs came to understand that they had more in common with each other than they did with their employees. About a year earlier, Milton Friedman had expounded his theory that shareholder value was the new Holy Grail. Between them, these two bright ideas spelled the end of the good times for U.S. workers.

Productivity—and profits—have soared, while wages have stagnated. Public interest think tanks like Common Cause and Public Citizen can point to a hundred studies showing that people desperately want health care, child care, gun control, a clean environment, and and family leave, but they're no closer to having them now than they were decades ago.

The rich now compete in the Opulence Olympics, frittering away "surplus value" stolen from ordinary people juggling two and three jobs.

How do you get those who are hanging by a thread to vote for politicians waving sharp knives around? Roll out that old time religion: pie in the sky, bye and by.

It's an incredibly effective ploy. Reagan invited in the evangelicals to harvest their votes. He's long gone, they're still here. It's just that now, instead of being coddled by the Party, they're in charge.

The Heritage Foundation's Project 2025 is, at 900 pages, a tome of Biblical proportions. That figures, since the plan is as authoritarian as the Old Testament. It lays out how things will be done after their unholy anti-president sets fire to our obsolete Constitution.

ISDS Courts Have Helped Fossil Fuel Firms Rake In $80 Billion in Public Money

"ISDS is the secret weapon for fossil fuel companies against climate laws," said one advocate.

by Julia Conley

A week after the European Union announced its withdrawal from the controversial Energy Charter Treaty, which has been criticized for being one of many global agreements that allow fossil fuel companies to sue governments, a coalition on June 6th released an analysis showing just how lucrative such deals have been for firms whose emissions are wreaking havoc on the planet.

The Transnational Institute, the Trade Justice Movement (TJM), Power Shift, and the Institute for Policy Studies joined forces to unveil the Global ISDS Tracker, which includes data on more than 1,300 cases that have made their way to secretive tribunals set up by investor-state dispute mechanisms in treaties including the Energy Charter Treaty.

ISDS courts allow fossil fuel companies and other large corporations to sue governments for compensation over policies that harm their profits, such as regulations to curb planet-heating emissions or air pollution, which is responsible for one in five deaths worldwide.

Many judgments made by ISDS tribunals are kept secret, but the Global ISDS Tracker revealed that $114 billion in public funds have been paid out to investors across industries, with fossil fuel companies and investors raking in $80.2 billion of that.

Another $48 billion in public money is expected to go to fossil fuel firms from ISDS disputes in the coming years if current trends continue, said the groups behind the tracker.

Tom Wills, director of TJM, said the tracker proves what trade and climate justice groups have said for years: "ISDS is the secret weapon for fossil fuel companies against climate laws."

"Corporate courts are also used to threaten governments not to give in to popular local or national demands for climate action," said Wills. "This needs to be put to an end. The data show reform is urgently needed."

The tracker includes the $15 billion compensation lawsuit filed by TC Energy against the U.S. government when President Joe Biden canceled the company's permit to build the Keystone XL pipeline, which would have carried 830,000 barrels of tar sands oil each day.

The largest ISDS claim currently being adjudicated is Zeph Investment's case against the Australian government, which the firm says "effectively destroyed" its plans for a major mine, costing it $200 billion.

As Common Dreams reported last November, civil society groups have called on the Biden administration to dismantle the ISDS system within the Americas Partnership for Economic Prosperity, with one campaigner arguing that ISDS was "created for and by powerful, well-organized corporations, and has served their interests almost exclusively."

Lucía Bárcena, trade policy officer at the Transnational Institute, said eliminating ISDS in treaties should be a top priority for trade and climate justice campaigners in the coming years.

"In this challenging moment, when there is more climate action needed from states," said Bárcena, "it is unbearable to have corporate courts that can wash all the efforts away."

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Investor–State Dispute Settlement (ISDS)

Investor–state dispute settlement, or an investment court system (ICS), is a set of rules through which countries can be sued by foreign investors for certain state actions affecting the investments (FDI, or Foreign Direct Investment) of that investor by that state. This most often takes the form of international arbitration between the foreign investor and nation. For the rules to be effective, they must have been agreed upon between the states concerned.

ISDS most often is an instrument of public international law, granting private parties (the foreign investors) the right to sue a sovereign nation in a forum other than that nation's domestic courts. Investors are granted this right through international investment agreements between the investor's home nation and the host nation. Such agreements can be found in bilateral investment treaties (BITs), international trade treaties such as the United States–Mexico–Canada Agreement and the proposed Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), or other treaties like the Energy Charter Treaty. Settlement of a dispute by arbitration also can be agreed upon only by the parties concerned.

– *Wikipedia*.

No doubt about it—Market Square Day was a huge success. Thousands of people flocked to Portsmouth on Saturday, to mill around, cheek to jowl, as is customary. Coronavirus? What in the world are you talking about?

Dozens Arrested as Activists Target Citigroup for Bankrolling Climate Breakdown

by Edward Carver

To kick off a season of climate activism, Summer of Heat campaigners on Monday morning blockaded the entrances to Citigroup's headquarters in New York City to protest the bank's role in perpetuating climate breakdown.

The campaigners locked arms and held banners at the doors to the Citigroup offices, blocking hundreds of employees from entering, according to social media posts by Climate Defenders, one of the organizations behind the Summer of Heat. They are targeting Citigroup, owner of Citibank, because the conglomerate financed more fossil fuel expansion than any bank in the world in the eight years after the 2015 Paris agreement was signed. Monday is the first day of a series of nonviolent direct actions the organizations have planned under the Summer of Heat banner.

"The atmosphere is electric as hundreds gather to shut down Citibank's Global HQ," Climate Defenders announced on social media. "We are here to demand a future free from fossil fuels."

"Big banks like Citi must stop financing fossil fuels and funding climate chaos!" Stop the Money Pipeline, one of the other convening organizations, wrote on social media.

Police have begun arresting some of the activists, video and social media posts from Climate Defenders and other organizations show. Renata Pumarol, deputy director of Climate Defenders, told Common Dreams that dozens had already been arrested by 10:50 a.m. ET on Monday, but didn't yet have an exact figure.

The arrests were expected and didn't dampen morale among the protesters.

"Arrests are happening now!" Stop the Money Pipeline announced on social media. "Our message is clear: If you keep funding the fossil fuel companies that are disrupting our climate and lives, we will disrupt your ability to do business."

"Citibank is the largest investor in expanding fossil fuels," a protestor wearing a lab coat with a Scientist Rebellion badge said as he was being arrested by police. "It is a crime. It is a crime against the planet."

In support of the action, the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) on Monday published an open letter to Citigroup CEO Jane Fraser calling for the bank to stop funding new fossil fuel projects.

"The financial industry must recognize the physical harms and economic risks it is exacerbating by enabling fossil fuel expansion and rapidly adopt new policies that align with a safer climate future," the letter states.

UCS plans to hand deliver the message on Wednesday at a "Scientists Speakout" Summer of Heat event outside the Citigroup headquarters, its statement said. That's just one of many upcoming events that organizers have planned.

"All summer long, we're going to be shutting down and blockading the headquarters of Citigroup and other banks financing new coal, oil, and gas projects," Alec Connon, co-director of Stop the Money Pipeline, told Common Dreams. "We're calling on New Yorkers and people from all over the country to join us. The time to hold Wall Street accountable for its role in the climate crisis is now."

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Capitalism cannot survive outside a class system.

Democracy cannot survive within one.

– pbamberger

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

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A $600 Billion Swindle: Study Makes Case to 'Abolish' Medicare Advantage

by Jake Johnson

A new academic analysis published Monday in JAMA Internal Medicine details the enormous sums that privatized Medicare Advantage plans have cost U.S. taxpayers in recent years and calls for the abolition of the program, which has been massively profitable for the insurance giants that dominate it.

Citing the nonpartisan Medicare Payment Advisory Commission, the paper notes that Medicare Advantage (MA) plans have overcharged the federal government to the tune of $612 billion since 2007—and $82 billion last year alone.

MA plans—now used by more than half of the eligible Medicare population—utilize a range of tactics to reap larger payments from the federal government, which provides insurers a lump sum for each Medicare Advantage patient. The size of the payment depends on the enrollee's health, which MA plans are notorious for portraying as worse than it is in order to receive heftier government payments.

"Paradoxically, despite those overpayments, MA plans spend 9 percent less on medical services than [fee-for-service] Medicare spends for comparable enrollees," reads the new study. "If MA plans pay for less care, where do the overpayments go? Some pay for supplementary benefits, although plans do not disclose how much they spend on them, and MA enrollees do not get significantly more dental care or incur lower out-of-pocket dental costs than those in FFS Medicare. Instead, overhead and profit eats up the lion's share."

The study's authors estimate that MA plans' overhead from 2007 to 2024 was $592 billion, which is "equivalent to 97 percent of taxpayers' $612 billion overpayments to them during that period."

Dr. Adam Gaffney, an assistant professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School and the lead author of the new study, said in a statement that "Medicare Advantage is a bad deal for taxpayers."

"Money that could be used to eliminate all copayments or shore up Medicare's Trust Fund is instead lining insurers' pockets," said Gaffney. "And the private insurers keep Medicare Advantage enrollees from getting needed care by erecting bureaucratic hurdles like prior authorizations and payment denials."

Gaffney and study co-authors Drs. Stephanie Woolhandler and David Himmelstein—co-founders of Physicians for a National Health Program (PHNP)—argue based on their examination of Medicare Advantage's decades long history that "the time has come to declare MA a failed experiment and abolish it."

"Medicare Advantage plans have, in effect, stolen hundreds of billions from taxpayers," says David Himmelstein, a lecturer at Harvard Medical School and a research associate at the consumer advocacy group Public Citizen. "And the private plans' schemes also raise seniors' Part B Medicare premiums. Even seniors who don't choose to enroll in Medicare Advantage are subsidizing the private plans' profits."

The study's authors observe that the elimination of Medicare Advantage would allow the federal government to use the roughly $88 billion in estimated MA overpayments for the coming year to instead "upgrade benefits for all Medicare beneficiaries." Traditional Medicare typically does not cover dental, vision, or hearing services, which often leads people to choose MA plans.

"A smarter, thriftier way to expand benefits and lower out-of-pocket costs is possible for all Medicare beneficiaries, but first, we must eliminate MA and double down on traditional Medicare, covering all enrollees in an expanded and improved Medicare program," the analysis concludes. "That would be a good deal for patients and taxpayers."

Wendell Potter, a former insurance executive who has become a trenchant critic of Medicare Advantage, told Common Dreams that he agrees with the study's authors that MA "should be eliminated."

"Not only has it never saved taxpayers a dime since it was created during the George W. Bush administration, but it has cost us $592 billion over the last 17 years because of the high administrative costs inherent in the program and the way insurers have rigged the system to get paid excessively every year," said Potter, president of the Center for Health and Democracy.

"The program is so entrenched, and the companies have so much political influence over Democrats as well as Republicans through campaign contributions and lobbying, that eliminating the program will be a heavy lift, at least in the near term," Potter added. "That means that proposals to reform MA that address overpayments and abuses like prior authorization are essential and important for reform advocates to support."

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Jake Johnson is a senior editor and staff writer for Common Dreams. This work is licensed under Creative Commons (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0). Feel free to republish and share widely.

Ah, yes: Sunday afternoon in Market Square. A time and place where and when people traditionally gather to express their fervent hopes for… what? Genocide in Gaza? This world gets stranger all the time.

Climate Change Talk on June 26th

Which would you prefer? Better public health, lower energy costs, or less global warming?

Why not all three?

Chris Skoglund, Director of Energy Transition for Clean Energy New Hampshire (CENH), will discuss how renewable energy can deliver on all three of those goals during a Community Talk on June 26th, at 7:00 p.m. at the Portsmouth Public Library. The event is being sponsored The Outreach Committee of the Portsmouth Democrats.

Mr. Skoglund and CENH strongly advocate for increased energy efficiency, strategic electrification of buildings and vehicles, and the development of local, affordable, clean energy generation.

To achieve these goals a utility infrastructure is also needed so that the entire state economy including homes, businesses, fleets, and state and municipal facilities, as well as industry can be decarbonized.

"We should be acting with urgency to reduce our energy consumption and demand across all sectors of our economy, while at the

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Beware of Cruise Ships
– a Bar Harbor reader

MAKE FASCISM WRONG AGAIN
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Murph's Fortnightly Quote
"The purpose of music is to elevate the spirit and inspire. Not to help push some product down your throat."
– Bob Dylan

"A board can avoid prosecution by demonstrating that it hasn't the faintest idea what its company was doing. Neglect can thus be used as a defense against the charge of neglect."
George Monbiot, *Bring on the Apocalypse*
john@wordpraxis.com

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Make America Primitive Again!

To the Editor:

Is your view of the world "conservative," meaning you have an aversion to change or innovation that might threaten traditional values?

Or, is your world view "primitive," meaning you favour a return to an earlier stage in the evolutionary development of society?

It's a relevant question because in MAGA world, the Supreme Court, and the U.S. Congress, the needle has swung past conservative and points squarely at primitive.

Facing a daily gusher of fear and loathing dished out by politicos, persuaders, and propagandists, no wonder we're losing our bearings. Hell, what harm does a little dose of coercion and cruelty do, if it keeps a lid on things?

We know where the money to support this tragedy is coming from. We know who's pulling the levers and who benefits. What we apparently don't know is how to stop it.

Regardless, let's keep in mind that what's occurring in America right now isn't rational, reasonable, or even remotely "conservative."

It's primal, primitive, and just plain wrong.

Rick Littlefield

Barrington, N.H.

Rick:

Here, here.

Once in a while, in conversation, we'll profess to having a conservative bent. That frequently results in looks of consternation. Sometimes people take it for a punchline and think we forgot to tell the joke.

There's a place for conservatism, and we're here for it. We're here for conserving an atmosphere that's neither poisonous nor destructive of a liveable climate. We're for conserving those species which our ancestors failed to drive to extinction. We're here for conserving the historical fabric of this crazy old town—and this crazy old newspaper.

All of these things are now at risk because a rich cabal of greedy fools have been on an extended power grab. They're itching to re-take the Executive branch this November, so they can, in effect, bust into the National Archives and burn the Constitution.

We do not, for the record, believe that God wrote the Constitution, or that the government it gave us is above reproach.

Far better to conserve it, though, than to let this mob re-write it.

The Editor

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No, Donald…

To the Editor:

No, Donald, Judge Merchan is not corrupt, he is meticulous and honest. But you wouldn't know how to recognize honesty.

No, Donald, the trial wasn't rigged. It followed prescribed procedures for giving attention to actual facts and the real requirements of the law. But you wouldn't know true facts since you spread thick and widespread lies to cover up your felonies.

No, Donald, this wasn't political retribution, although that is what you keep promising if you ever set foot in the White House again. It was bringing you to legal accountability because even Presidents are not above the law.

"Disgrace," Donald, is a word you like to use when you don't get your way. The word suits you perfectly.

No, Donald, this isn't a s___hole country, although it might become one if you were to get your way.

Bruce Joffe

Piedmont, Calif.

Bruce:

Exactly what he needs to hear. You could probably repeat it in his ear for months on end, though, without getting through to him.

What might have a salutary effect would be a few years in the joint, rubbing elbows with the general population.

Of course, U.S. prisons should not exist, as they are currently constituted. They are standing violations of human rights. Not even convicted felons deserve the sort of treatment meted out within their walls.

As long as they exist, though, there should be none of this class-based, two-tiered scheme of incarceration. Why should convicted white collar criminals get the kid glove treatment? They do, though, and we've come to accept it as "just the way things are."

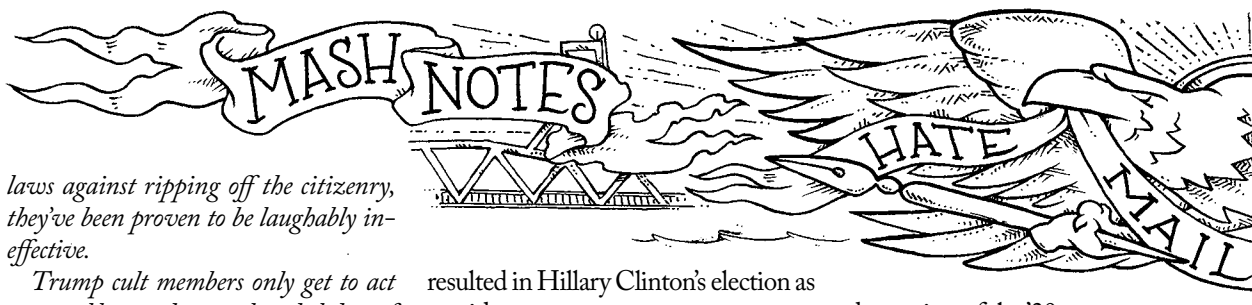
This issue only gets worse when you look at it in context. In this country, white collar crime has nearly been defined out of existence. To the extent that we do have laws against ripping off the citizenry, they've been proven to be laughably ineffective.

Trump cult members only get to act outraged because he—and a whole host of other skeevy buggers—have never been held accountable.

A good friend of this paper once had a bumper stickers reading, "Visualize Using Your Turn Signal" and "Hang Up and Drive."

We need one saying, "Make White Collar Crime Illegal Again."

The Editor



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Telling It Like It Is

Dear Editor,

Donald Trump's wannabe running mate Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL) says the Manhattan hush-money trial was "the most outrageous travesty" he has ever seen. He says, "This is a quintessential show trial. This is what you see in communist countries." (Fox News, May 30, 2024)

Let's see now. In communist show trials, juries are packed with party loyalists, whereas in the Manhattan trial, the twelve jurors were approved by attorneys from both the prosecution and the defense. In communist show trials, the defendant loses his life. In the Manhattan trial, Trump lost a little campaigning time. In a communist show trial, the justice system is run by a totalitarian dictator without elections. In the Manhattan trial, the prosecutor, governor, President, and everyone else down to dogcatcher is elected in the light of day in free elections.

MAGA republican voters believe whatever a party bigwig like Rubio says. They just want to go with the flow, have some fun wearing red hats, and save their own skins. In fact, Rubio and his boss are the real witch-hunters in America. Democrats don't seem to have the ability or the will to expose the propaganda Republicans are smearing them with.

Kimball Shinkoskey

Woods Cross, Utah

Kimball:

Tell it, Brother Kimball!

We have always enjoyed running your letters from the Beehive State, but this one really rings the bell.

The Editor

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Now It's Official: 2016 Election Was Stolen

To the Editor:

After the conviction of Donald Trump on 34 felony counts in New York City, he is now a convicted felon. His conviction was associated with a conspiracy to commit federal and state election fraud during the 2016 elections. His conspiracy was aimed at manipulating the elections by covering up illegal accounting activities and sexual encounters that could have resulted in Hillary Clinton's election as president.

Democrats and Hillary Clinton can reasonably claim that the 2016 Elections were stolen from them and have reasons to be angry about it.

Mr. Trump has continued to claim that the 2020 election was stolen from him, despite no reputable evidence being presented and dozens of judges ruling against him. Perhaps this "Stolen Election" story was just a diversion to deflect attention from his 2016 conspiracy. While Republican claims of a stolen 2020 election are fake and unproven, Democratic claims of a stolen 2016 election are now supported by real evidence and a court decision.

Voters now must decide if they want a convicted felon as President, and if they want him to represent the United States of America on the international stage.

Peter Somssich, former N.H. State Representative, and former Portsmouth Democratic Chair

Portsmouth, N.H.

Peter:

It has been said many times before: every Republican accusation is a confession. Now Trump's conviction for cheating to steal the 2016 election is on the books.

It's a shame the facts don't get more traction, because this one is important.

The Editor

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The Truth About Trade Policies

To the Editor:

National news coverage has lately been focused on Donald Trump's legal perils. Less attention has been paid to his statements regarding the policies he would enact if elected. These statements should not be ignored. What they reveal about Trump's intentions is as disturbing as his purported criminal acts. His statements regarding tariff policy are especially troubling.

Trump has stated that he would levy the following tariffs after his election—at least 60 percent on all Chinese imports, 100 percent on all imported cars, and 10 percent on all other imported goods. Even given Trump's penchant for exaggeration, these proposals reveal a shocking ignorance regarding the purpose and effect of tariffs. If enacted, these tariffs would wreak havoc on the American economy, significantly raising prices for consumers, costing thousands of jobs and severely constraining economic growth—exactly the opposite effects claimed by Trump. Additionally, they would undoubtedly bring about retaliation by global competitors, initiating a downward spiral like that which contributed to the global depression of the '30s.

Trump should have learned from experience during his previous administration. His tariffs raised the price of targeted goods by four percent and cost Americans 166,000 jobs. After enacting tariffs on Chinese goods, he claimed that China would pay the duties. This statement revealed a serious misunderstanding regarding how tariffs work. There is no requirement nor little incentive for either a foreign government or manufacturer to pay the levy. Tariffs are paid by the U.S. importer of the goods to the U.S. government at the port of entry. The importer usually passes on the added cost to the end buyer. Most if not all the charge is eventually passed on to the consumer in the form of higher prices. In plain words, tariffs almost always result in a tax on the consumer and not on the foreign manufacturer. Studies of Trump's Chinese tariffs confirm this point. They were almost wholly paid by U.S. consumers in the form of higher prices and more jobs were lost than gained by American manufacturers. Among the biggest beneficiaries of the tariffs were Vietnamese firms who were subcontracted by Chinese manufacturers and distributed the targeted goods from Vietnam thereby avoiding the tariffs. There is no reason to think that if Trump is re-elected, his proposed set of tariffs would have a different effect.

Tariffs are useful in three circumstances: (1) to protect "infant" industries that a country deems important to its development but are not currently competitive vis-a-vis foreign competition (*e.g.* Biden's tariffs on e-cars and solar panels), (2) to protect industries essential to national security (*e.g.* high-performance computer chips), and (3) to retaliate against foreign dumping and unfair trade. In almost all other cases, tariffs are detrimental to economic growth. Tariffs and other trade restrictions were steadily reduced following World War II facilitating growth in trade and prosperity. Combined with the creation of global supply chains based on containerized shipping, the reduction of trade restrictions was responsible for lifting millions out of poverty in China and other less developed countries. In the U.S., increased global trade provided a plethora of low-cost, high-quality goods to consumers while global competition held inflation in check. Globalization also created losers in the American economy. Manufacturing jobs were lost, and blue-collar wages stagnated. Despite lip service by

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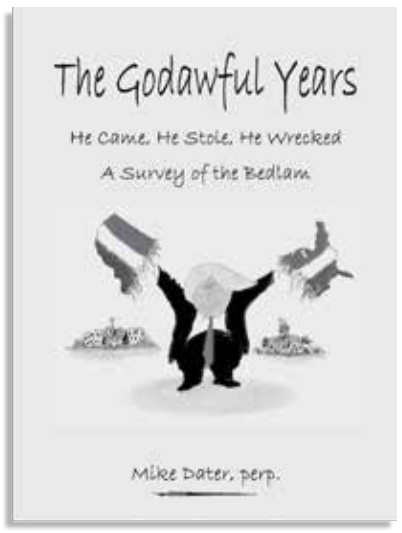

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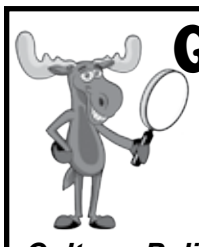

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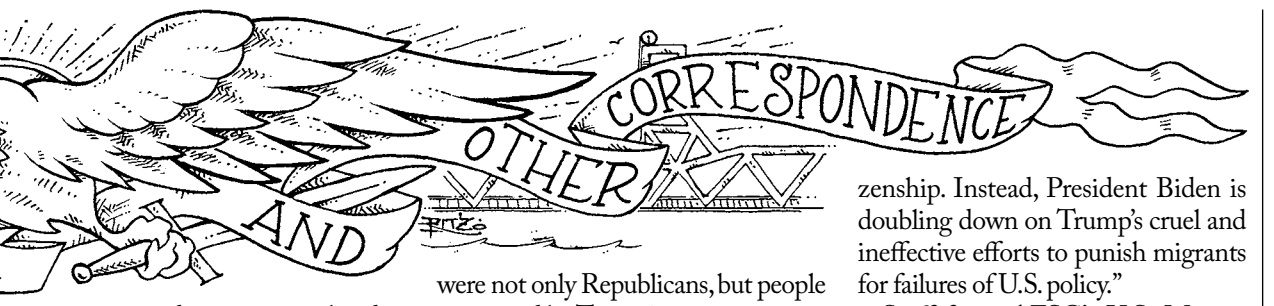

government and corporations that displaced workers would be compensated and retrained, the promises were largely unkept, creating a mass of angry and resentful workers that contribute to Trump's populist base.

Despite the discontents of globalization, trade provides a positive stimulus to economic growth. Complex modern economies cannot maintain current levels of prosperity without it. The willy-nilly increase in tariffs proposed by Donald Trump would significantly increase inflation, decimate employment, and constrain growth. Although the impact of global trade on American workers must be managed more effectively, the answer is not to surrender to the ignorant populism of Trump but to craft trade policies beneficial to all participants.

Robert D. Russell, Ph.D.

Harrisburg, Pa.

Robert:

Thank you for laying out these facts so clearly. That's a valuable service in an environment so filled with inanity and lies.

We would just add that, as "increased global trade provided a plethora of low-cost, high-quality goods to consumers," corporations racked up huge profits. The net worth of the CEOs soared, as U.S. workers were left to fend for themselves.

The Editor

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Trump: Winner Or Whiner?

To the Editor:

According to Trump and his backers, there's more rigging going on than you could find aboard a clipper ship! The election was rigged (Trump knows that's a lie), the polls are rigged (if Biden's ahead). Most of all, Trump whines his trial and guilty verdict were rigged. The judge was unfair, the jury was biased (Trump's lawyers were full partners in jury selection), and the sentence will be unfair.

As sportscaster Colin Cowherd pointed out, "If everybody in your circle is a felon, maybe it's not rigged." Maybe you're a felon! I mean, "his campaign chairman is a felon. So is his deputy campaign manager, his personal lawyer, his chief strategist, his National Security Adviser, his Trade Advisor, his Foreign Policy Adviser, his campaign fixer, his company CFO. They're all felons." And Trump is too.

Trump is 34 counts guilty. He has been impeached twice: rigged. His supporters, most of whom watch Fox or some other sensationalist "news" outlet, seem to have no idea how compelling the evidence against him in the January 6th hearings is, or that those with the most damning testimony were not only Republicans, but people appointed by Trump!

There's lots more: the E. Jean Carrol rape case, the forced closing and payback for both Trump University fraud, and phony Trump charities, the six bankruptcies, the $355 million in penalties he was assessed for duping banks, three more pending criminal cases, and others….

No, everything isn't rigged. Trump is just a whiner—and a convicted felon.

Michael Frandzel

Portsmouth, N.H.

Michael:

Somehow, in the course of reading this, we had a weird, uncomfortable feeling. It took a while to place it. When we did, we were shocked.

It was a tiny little twinge of sympathy for the ignorant, self-centered, garrulous grotesque who's been the bane of our existence for nearly a decade now.

Think about it: he had no more power to pick his parents than anyone else ever did. His grandfather was a pimp, his father was a racist goon, and he was insulated from the real world by obscene amounts of money. He'd have had a better chance of growing into a reasonable facsimile of a decent person if he'd been yanked from his home and put in an orphanage.

Fortunately, that bizarre frame of mind vanished almost immediately. We're once again fully prepared to see him suffer whatever fate may bring him—and that can't happen soon enough.

If any history survives in what is to be our collective future—which would have to be despite the whiner in question, and the followers in his cult—he'll go down in it as one of the nastiest specimens of our species to have ever lived.

The Editor

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Quakers Call Biden Border Order Cruel And Ineffective

WASHINGTON, D.C. (June 4, 2024)—Today the Biden Administration issued an Executive Order that would shut down the U.S.-Mexico border based on the number of people seeking entry. The American Friends Service Committee—a Quaker organization that works with migrants at the border and around the world—spoke out against the decision.

"Closing the border to people seeking safety is immoral, counterproductive, and a violation of international law," said Amy Gottlieb, U.S. Migration Director for AFSC. "What we need is to create a fair and welcoming immigration system that processes immigration claims quickly, connects people to supportive services, and provides avenues for residency and citizenship. Instead, President Biden is doubling down on Trump's cruel and ineffective efforts to punish migrants for failures of U.S. policy."

Staff from AFSC's U.S.-Mexico border program, along with partners and volunteers, have been at the border nearly every day for the past eight months, providing humanitarian aid to people that U.S. Border Patrol is holding between border walls in "open-air detention sites." Children, families, and individuals are not allowed to leave and don't have adequate access to water, food, sanitation, medical care or protection from the elements.

"Who does it protect to terrorize families? Who does it serve to close the door on families seeking safety and a better life?" said Adriana Jasso, Coordinator of AFSC's U.S.-Mexico Border Program. "Our border communities don't want more walls and border closures. We want policies that give everyone an opportunity to thrive, no matter where they were born."

AFSC says it will will be mobilizing supporters to contact the Biden administration and Congress to demand the Executive Order be rescinded and just and welcoming policies be implemented in its place. To learn more about AFSC's work on these issues, visit: *https://afsc.org/topics/migrant-justice*.

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"But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God."

– Leviticus 19:34

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"I think many times the way immigrants—people look at immigrants with such a sense of diminishment, as if this person is less than I am because they've left their country. Well, I actually think they're more than we are, because they're braver. They've gone some other place. They have to operate in another language. How easy would that be? If I had to go to China today and start living in China and doing everything in Chinese, it would be very, very hard. So you think about the bravery of these people and the desperation with which they're trying to find a realm of safety for their families and—just the basic safeties that we take for granted, every day we get up. And I don't know; I don't know how a world with so many resources and so many religious traditions and good hopes—how we can keep doing these things to one another in the world that create refugee populations. It just seems outrageous. Why is that happening so much?"

– Naomi Shihab Nye

Juneteenth, 2024

Juneteenth is the oldest known nationally celebrated event commemorating the end of slavery in the United States. President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation declared that as of January 1, 1863, all slaves of the states in rebellion against the Union "shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free." However, it was not until June 19th, 1865, two years later, when the U.S. Army took possession of Galveston Island in Texas and began a campaign against the defenders of slavery, that the enslaved people in Galveston could begin their journey towards freedom.

Thanks to *BlackHeritageTrailNH.org*, we're able to let our readers know about the following local events scheduled for June 19th—Juneteenth.

Juneteenth Freedom Walk
Wednesday, June 19th, 9:30 a.m.

Celebrate Juneteenth side-by-side with others of goodwill by walking from Kittery, Maine, to the African Burying Ground in Portsmouth, New Hampshire! Meet at John Paul Jones Memorial Park on the Kittery side of the Route 1 Memorial Bridge. Wakers will gather by 9:00 a.m. and begin the 0.8-mile walk at 9:30 a.m. to the Burying Ground at 386 State Street, Portsmouth, N.H., led by The Leftist Marching Band.

Parking for those participating in the walk is available at Kittery Walk-in Care, 35 Walker Street, and wheelchair-accessible parking spots across Hunter Ave by the Warren's Lobster sign.

Bring a Sign! Bring a tambourine. Help celebrate African American Freedom!

This walk is hosted by The Seacoast African American Cultural Center, Green Acre Baha'i Center of Learning, and Seacoast NAACP.

African Drumming at the African Burying Ground
Wednesday, June 19th, 11:00 a.m.
A Time To Praise, A Time To Honor, A Time To Heal

Traditionally the drum was the heartbeat and soul of African communities, thus holding deep historic and symbolic significance. The drums herald political and social events and ceremonies of birth, death, and marriage. They spark courtships, home-coming and going, and accompany religious rites and rituals that call up ancestral spirits while creating an atmosphere that promotes healing and social resilience.

This commemorative event, live streaming from the Portsmouth African Burying Ground, is a celebration of Black Joy that pays homage to the ancestors. The healing beat of the drums provided by Akwaaba Ensemble, an African drumming and dance group and a ceremony by Rev. Robert Thompson will honor the ancestors who survived upon these shores.

African Drumming Workshop, 10:30 a.m., prior to African Drumming Ceremony

Theo Martey, Director of The Akwaaba Ensemble, will lead the "African Touch" drumming workshop for kids and parents as we connect with our ancestors to celebrate Juneteenth through rhythms, dances, and songs.

The Magic Of Motown
Wednesday, June 19th, 7:30 p.m.
Concert Presented by Moxie Events, at The Music Hall

Don't miss this fantastic journey through all of the hits! Hailed by audiences as "The Best Motown Show In The Country," the show will dazzle you for over two hours! This cast of 18 people embodies the best of Motown, delivering all the hits from The Temptations, The Jackson Five, Diana Ross & The Supremes, The Four Tops, Aretha Franklin, Smokey Robinson, and more! The show's pitch-perfect harmonies, dynamic choreography, & costuming perfectly capture the sights & sounds of Motown.

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from page three

same time increasing our instate and regional clean energy resources," Skoglund says.

"These measures will not only help to improve our public health and reduce the drivers of global warming and climate change, but will also reduce the financial burden on customers resulting from dramatic swings in the cost of energy."

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500 Years Ago, Machiavelli Warned The Public Not To Get Complacent In The Face Of Self-Interested Charismatic Figures

by Vickie B. Sullivan

A United States president sought to remain in office after his term ended, maintains a worshipful following and has declared he will operate as a dictator only on "day one" if reelected. His cunning and manipulation of American politics and its legal system have, so far, blocked efforts to hold him accountable.

That sort of activity has been called "Machiavellian," after Renaissance writer Niccolò Machiavelli, who lived from 1469 to 1527. He wrote a notorious little treatise called *The Prince*, in which he advises sole rulers—his phrase for authoritarians or dictators—as well as those who aspire to sole rule to use force and fraud to gain and maintain power.

But scholars of Machiavelli like me know there is much more to his analysis. His 16th-century writings discuss not only princely rule but also republican governments, in which citizens select leaders directly or indirectly for specified terms. He instructs republican citizens and leaders, including those of the United States, to recognize how vulnerable the governments they cherish are and to be vigilant against the threats of tyranny. Machiavelli's advice is as relevant now as it was then.

Machiavelli's republican experience

Machiavelli knew from experience and his extensive reading that there was a long history of nations with republican governments falling victim to ambitious individuals who sought to subvert their nations' practices and institutions so they could rule alone and unchecked, with all others serving at their behest and on their authority.

For example, he was from the city-state of Florence in what is now Italy. Florence had had a republican tradition for centuries, but about 30 years before Machiavelli's birth, banker and politician Cosimo de' Medici had subverted that system. Cosimo had used his family's wealth to propel himself to political power by exerting influence over officeholders so that he was the ultimate decision-maker.

Cosimo's descendants inherited his political power. They briefly lost their grip on power just long enough for Machiavelli to participate for about a decade as an official and diplomat in a restored republic. Machiavelli was in office when the republic collapsed with the return of the Medici family to power.

Removed from office, Machiavelli wrote "The Prince." He prefaced it with a dedicatory letter to the young member of the Medici whom the family had designated as the new ruler of Florence. Commentators have long disagreed about what Machiavelli sought by so obviously pandering to an autocratic ruler.

The 'Discourses,' Machiavelli's republican writing

That puzzle is all the more perplexing because elsewhere Machiavelli expresses his commitment to republican government. He wrote another book, less well known and much less pithy than "The Prince," entitled "Discourses on Livy." In the "Discourses," Machiavelli uses the work of the ancient Roman historian Livy to examine how the Roman republic was overthrown by a single leader.

At its founding, Rome was a kingship, but when subsequent kings became tyrannical, the Roman people overthrew the monarchy and established a republic, which had a remarkable history and lasted almost 500 years.

The Roman republic collapsed in 44 BCE when Julius Caesar declared himself dictator for life. Machiavelli wrote that Julius Caesar was the first tyrant in Rome, with the result that Rome was never again free.

Julius' immediate successor Octavius, who assumed the name Caesar Augustus, ruled as the first of a long line of emperors.

Lessons from the demise of the Roman republic

The key lesson of Machiavelli's examination of Roman history in the "Discourses" is this: A republic is fragile. It requires constant vigilance on the part of both the citizens and their leaders.

That vigilance is difficult to maintain, however, because over generations, citizens and leaders alike become complacent to a key internal threat that haunts this form of government. Specifically, they fail to grasp early enough the anti-republican designs of exceptionally ambitious citizens among them who harbor the desire to rule alone.

Machiavelli provides instructive examples of how Rome failed to protect its republican practices and laws against such a threat. When the republic was young, Rome allowed candidates to nominate themselves for high offices. This practice worked well because only worthy candidates put themselves forward. Later, however, the practice of self-nomination allowed into office those who wanted to promote their own popularity rather than respond to the needs of their country.

Machiavelli said that leaders and citizens devoted to the republic should have closed off this easy route to power to such candidates. But Rome failed to act. Because of its complacency, Caesar was able to build on the popularity that his predecessors had amassed and to transform Rome into a tyranny.

The point of no return

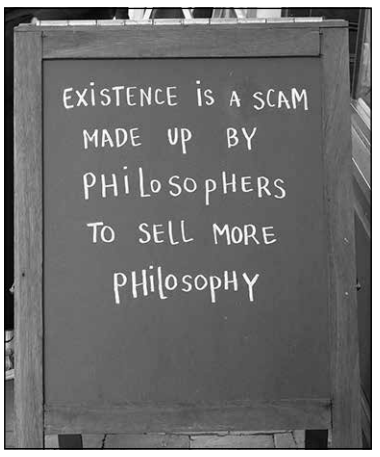
If republican citizens and leaders fail to be vigilant, they will eventually be confronted with a leader who has accumulated an extremely powerful and threatening following. At that point, Machiavelli says, it will be too late to save the republic.

Machiavelli uses the examples of Caesar's assassination in Rome and Cosimo's exile from Florence to underscore this lesson. In each case, the supporters of their respective republic, finally perceiving the danger of tyranny, initiated an attack on the people's idol. In each case, that effort led not to a restoration of republican freedom but rather to its elimination.

In Rome, Augustus used the public's sympathy and devotion for the martyred Caesar to seal the republic's demise. In Florence, Cosimo himself was welcomed back from exile to become Florence's leading man.

The fate of the American republic

For Americans, the question is whether, as a result of public complacency, the republic will be lost. Will the American republic fall to the same perils that Machiavelli identified in ancient Rome and Renaissance Florence?



Our A-Frame of the Fortnight Award—non-existent until just now—goes to Gus & Ruby Letterpress, on Congress Street.

Perhaps an opportunity exists to breathe new life into the nation's republican practices and institutions. Perhaps there is still time to reject through elections those who seek office only to enhance their own power.

Or perhaps it is so late that even that approach will not work. Then, Americans would be left to mourn the demise of their republic and to affirm Machiavelli's counsel that republics fail through complacency. Such an outcome for one of history's most exemplary republics would stand as a wretched testament to Machiavelli's political insight.

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Vickie B. Sullivan is Professor of Political Science, Tufts University. This work was published by The Conversation, and is reprinted here under a Creative Commons license.

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Better Old News, Than New Lies…

His Royal Corpulency

The news that Henry Villard has undertaken the task of electing Grover Cleveland is received with dismay by the friends of his royal corpulency in New York. Henry has the reputation of successfully ruining whatever enterprise or movement he undertakes.

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Newspaper copyright may be a good thing, but it seems somewhat superfluous from a practical standpoint. A newspaper that steals advertises its own turpitude, and the public treats it according to its deserts.

– *Boston Sunday Herald*

The above was printed in a paper which regularly, week by week, steals nearly one-third of its personal page bodily from Town Topics, without credit and without changing a line or a word.

– *New Hampshire Gazette* June 16, 1892, pg. 4.

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The Senate of the United States

"The Senate of the United States," said a veteran public official to me lately, as we sat in the Senate gallery looking down on this august collection of lawyers and business men, "is the most powerful, corrupt and falsely dignified body in the world, It can block all legislation coming over from the co-ordinate house; the president feels its mighty endorsing and confirming power daily, and is at its mercy in every nomination he makes; while even the Supreme Court is its plaything when law and legislation conflict. The rule senatorial courtesy is a part of our unwritten Constituton that is stronger than anything in the written fabric of our government. That rule shuts the mouths of seventy-five senators when the prejudice of one of their number objects to even the most reasonable nomination sent in by the president.

"The word of a senator is never contradicted in executive session, and by the rule must be believed and acted upon. These two institutions—the rule of courtesy and the executive session—are the undemocratic, un-American features of our government."

– *New Hampshire Gazette* June 16, 1892, pg. 8.

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A Strange Story

The following article was printed in the *Eastern Argus* of Portland, Me., last Friday, but the woman was evidently cunning enough to conceal her identity and the residence, as the description does not fit anyone here. Perhaps she came from Dover:

It was a peculiar sight this morning between twelve and one o'clock to see one of the deputies arm in arm with a distinguished looking lady going up Exchange street. She was about fifty years or more and possessed the gentlest and most refined manners that suggested good breeding. Her dress was of a decided stylish trim and made of costly goods and her gray hair lent the finishing touches to the appearance of a wealthy and respectable lady.

As a matter of etiquette the deputy had her arm, but she insisted as a diversion of formality by taking the deputy's arm and so they continued up Exchange street. It was simply a morning walk to the station as she was found very drunk and trying to borrow a quarter from a genial newspaper man when interrupted by the official. It seems that the woman belongs in Portsmouth, N.H., and is said to belong in the upper ten, but she leaves home just

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Techno-Assault & Battery

by W.D. Ehrhart

Technology and I have a long and unhappy history dating back to the fall of 1970 when I took a course during my sophomore year at Swarthmore College called Engineering for Non-Majors, but popularly known as "Engine Whiz." In those days, the computer took up the entire basement of the engineering building. You would sit in the classroom, and Professor Doby would write on the blackboard exactly the instructions you were supposed to type in. And then you would go down to the computer room and type it onto the computer punch-cards.

And I would do exactly as I was instructed. But my program would never work. I'm not kidding. Even Professor Doby, who was a nice guy and gave me a passing grade anyway, couldn't figure out why it never worked for me.

Fast forward to the 1990s. The Internet arrives. But I like paper letters with ink on them, and putting stuff in the mail, and getting stuff back in the mail. Maybe it goes back to my time in the Marines when mail call was a really big deal, I don't really know. But I refused to buy into this new-fangled e-mail method of communicating. I'm gonna stick with the tried and true.

Except that after a few years, I began to realize that editors I used to work with regularly were no longer answering my letters. If I wanted to continue publishing what I wrote, I would need to get myself onto the Electronic Super-highway, and begin communicating by e-mail. I was then in my mid-40s, and still had much of my writing life ahead of me, so I acquired e-mail and eventually became reasonably comfortable with it.

But the tidal wave of technology didn't stop there. In the early part of this century, I was offered a job teaching at the Haverford School for Boys. A couple of years into the job, each classroom got equipped with a desktop computer on which we recorded class attendance. Soon afterwards, we were also required to file our students' quarterly comments online. And as the years passed, the school required ever more of what we did to be done on the computer.

By the time I retired five years ago, most teachers posted their entire courses online digitally: every reading, every assignment, every grade (all of it available to the parents), while students were not only allowed, but required, to submit their assignments electronically, as well as taking quizzes and tests online.

I didn't do any of that. Up to the day of my retirement, my students read printed books, submitted assignments on actual paper, and wrote exams on paper and in Blue Books (remember those?). I did not allow computers in my classroom, let alone what became those ubiquitous Smart-phones because there was absolutely no reliable way to prevent kids from watching YouTube sports or texting their girlfriends.

I don't think the school's administrators were all that happy with me and my guerrilla techno-resistance, but I was otherwise pretty good at what I did, and I was by then already on Medicare, so I guess they figured I wouldn't be around that much longer in any case. But every year, I fell farther and farther behind the techno-curve. And I finally figured I'd better leave on my own steam before some alpha dog board member started asking, "Why's that dinosaur still here?"

Needless to say, I never partook of Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok, or any other form of "social media," none of which strikes me as very social. I don't do text messaging. I carry a flip-phone. I know that technology is the future, and the future is now, but I'm finally old enough that I just don't care. It's not like if I do all that social media stuff, I'm suddenly going to be discovered by the editors of *Harper's Magazine*, who will invite me to write a cover story for them, and I'll become famous and win a National Book Award.

However, recently a friend from the town I grew up in sent me a photo of an exhibit at the Perkasie Historical Society Museum that featured my book Vietnam-Perkasie and a photo of me, and asked me if I was aware of it. It was news to me, but I happened to be up that way later in the month, so I went over to check it out. The folks who run the museum were obviously pleased by my visit, and they photographed me in front of the exhibit, and posted that on their Facebook page with a little write-up.

On the same day that appeared, a Swarthmore friend posted an essay of mine, "Protests, Then & Now" from the web page of *Current Affairs** on the Swarthmore Alumni Connections Facebook page. So I finally gave in and decided I would actually give Facebook a try.

And here's where it gets really interesting. I followed the Facebook instructions to the letter (just like I had always done in Professor Doby's class), and I seemed to have been successful, but seven minutes later, before I had even posted anything, I get a message from Facebook telling me that my account has been suspended because I've violated their Community Standards. I have 180 days to appeal the suspension before it becomes permanent.

So I push the red button that says "Appeal," and that sends me to a page that explains the procedure. Only it doesn't because the page is bigger than the screen, and the whole bottom part of the document is not visible, and there is no mechanism to scroll down. I even asked my wife, who had been a systems engineer for two decades, to take a look, but she (much like poor Professor Doby) couldn't figure it out either.

So I'm told I've violated the Facebook Community Standards, but I can appeal my suspension, but I am provided with no means of appeal. And this is seven minutes after I opened my account and before I've even posted anything.

I ranted and raged for awhile, then went for a long walk with a friend and former colleague from the Haverford School, which was very relaxing, and by the time I got home, I had decided that I've managed 75 years without Facebook, and can probably manage for what is left of the rest of my life.

My wife concurs with my decision. I'll bet Professor Doby would, too.

I'm pretty sure I was born several centuries too late.

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

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* *https://www.currentaffairs.org/2024/05/protests-then-and-now*

Corporate America's New Euphemisms for Gouging You

by Jim Hightower

We should pay attention to corporate America's fluctuating wordplay, for their frequent contortions of language disguise ploys to dupe, confuse, and rip off us hoi polloi—i.e., their customers.

For example, here's a mouthful that's been gaining popularity among manufacturers of food products: Price Pack Architecture. It's a bit of gobbledygook meant to obscure the profiteering practice of—shhhh—ever so quietly shrinking the size and contents of their packages—without lowering prices. Economists dubbed this "shrinkflation," but that too clearly implied gouging. Thus, corporate image-makers invented the incomprehensible nonsense phrase of PPA to cloak their anti-consumer trickery.

This convoluted codeword also allows the tricksters to brag openly about their cleverness to their Wall Street investors. Here's Coca-Cola's CEO, for example, doing corporate-speak to bankers in February: "We are leveraging our revenue growth management capabilities to tailor our offerings and price pack architecture to meet consumers' evolving needs."

English translation: Consumers will need to pay us more for less Coke. You could almost hear the bankers weep for joy over Coke's sneaky scheme to stiff its customers.

Perhaps you've wondered what big-time corporate CEOs actually do to rake in their exorbitant salaries, now averaging more than $8,000 an hour! Well, there it is: The CEO's main job is to keep workers' pay low, monopolize markets, and constantly invent slick ways to squeeze another dime from each consumer's pocket.

It's not honest work, but it does pay well. Coca-Cola's CEO James Quincey, for example, hauled in $25 million in pay last year. That's 1,800 times more than the annual income of the typical Coca-Cola worker, who'll now pay more for a sip of Coke, thanks to Quincey's "price pack architecture."

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The Alleged News®

from page six

so often during the year to get drunk and generally winds up her spree by borrowing where she can. What could have been her motive to come to Portland to get drunk. She ought to have known that Portland is a prohibition city.

The Secret Ballot

Editor of *Chronicle*: In your issue of Tuesday, the 14th inst., I read with equal surprise and pleasure that a vote was to be taken on the 20th inst. on the question of adopting the secret ballot for the municipal election in August. With surprise, because I was aware that several months ago the board of mayor and alderman "referred to the city solicitor for his opinion" a petition signed by a large number of citizens that such a vote be taken, and was unaware that the solicitor had ever rendered such report or that the board of alderment had taken any action thereon, no mention of such report or action having appeared in the published accounts of the meetings of the city government in any of the city papers.

…The question arises, "When did the board of aldermen decide upon granting the prayer of the citizens' petition?" Was it at some specially-called dark-lantern session of the board, in order that the matter might be kept as quiet as possible, that the citizens in favor of a free and untrammeled ballot might not get aroused in regard to the question, and thereby enable the opponents of the secret ballot to steal a quiet march on them, and give an overwhelming "no" at the polls? …

– Independent Partisan

– New Hampshire Gazette
June 23, 1892, pg. 3.

Misc.

The *Gazette* endorses in the heartiest fashion the communication in another column, and advises every citizen without regard to politics to vote for an honest, free ballot and a fair count, such as the secret ballot gives. …

Mr. Joshua M. Vaughan received another monkey from the south and it was put in the cage with Ben as the original member of the Simian family has been christened. …

Dr. T.W. Atherton arrived home from Concord, Friday evening, accompanied by his wife. He has fully recovered from his recent mental trouble….

– New Hampshire Gazette
June 23, 1892, pg. 6.

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Admiral Fowle's Piscataqua River Tidal Guide (Not for Navigational Purposes)

Portsmouth, arguably the first town in this country not founded by religious extremists, is bounded on the north and east by the Piscataqua River, the second, third, or fourth fastest-flowing navigable river in the country, depending on whom you choose to believe.

The Piscataqua's ferocious current is caused by the tide, which, in turn, is caused by the moon. The other player is a vast sunken valley — Great Bay — about ten miles upriver. Twice a day, the moon drags about seventeen billion gallons of seawater — enough to fill 2,125,000 tanker trucks — up the river and into Great Bay. This creates a roving hydraulic conflict, as incoming sea and the outgoing river collide. The skirmish line moves from the mouth of the river, up past New Castle, around the bend by the old Naval Prison, under Memorial Bridge, past the tugboats, and on into Great Bay. This can best be seen when the tide is rising.

Twice a day, too, the moon lets all that water go. All the seawater that just fought its way upstream goes back home to the ocean. This is when the Piscataqua earns its title for xth fastest current. Look for the red buoy, at the upstream end of Badger's Island, bobbing around in the current. It weighs several tons, and it bobs and bounces in the current like a cork.

The river also has its placid moments, around high and low tides. When the river rests, its tugboats and bridges work their hardest. Ships coming in laden with coal, oil, and salt do so at high tide, for more clearance under their keels. They leave empty, riding high in the water, at low tide, to squeeze under Memorial Bridge.

Sunday, June 16

2020—The *Wall Street Journal* publishes Mike Pence's op-ed, "There Isn't a Coronavirus Second Wave."
2019—"Last Call" at The Hammer.
2015—For $50 each, 240 actors cheer on cue in the lobby of Trump Tower as the star of a [cancelled] TV show announces he's running for President.
2000—The Energy Department discovers two missing Top Secret computer hard drives in a location which had previously been searched twice.
1992—Reagan Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger is indicted for lying to Congress, but is soon pardoned.
1991—Otis Nixon steals six bases.
1966—Stokely Carmichael, continuing the March Against Fear as James Meredith recuperates from an assassination attempt, introduces "Black Power" to our national lexicon.
1944—South Carolina kills George J. Stinney Jr. He's Black, 14, and weighs 90 lbs. His three-hour trial had an all-white jury. He sits on phone books so the electrodes can reach him.
1943—Charlie Chaplin, 54, marries Oona O'Neill, 18; only his death in 1977 does them part.
1918—Eugene V. Debs delivers an anti-draft speech in Canton, Ohio that is so stirring and effective he is later charged with ten counts of sedition.
1857—A riot erupts between New York City's two police departments. Corrupt Democratic Mayor Fernando Wood's recently-abolished Municipal Police retains its hold on City Hall.

7:44 8:08 1:29 1:41

Monday, June 17

2020—"[T]he numbers are very minuscule compared to what it was," says Dolt #45, "[Covid is] dying out."
2017—Brass on the USS *Fitzgerald* get their nimble destroyer rammed by a container ship; 7 enlisted sailors die, three are injured, repairs bill: $367M.
2015—Oxymoronic white "supremacist" murders nine in Charleston, S.C.
1972—A Black Vietnam veteran catches Nixon's Watergate spies.
1971—"I want it implemented on a thievery basis," President Nixon tells aides. "Goddamn it, get in [to the Brookings Institution] and get those files [that might reveal my treasonous interference with the Paris Peace talks]. Blow the safe and get it."
1967—Defense Secretary Robert Strange McNamara commissions a secret history of the Vietnam War.
1933—Syphilitic former sheriff and WWI hero Verne Miller, with three armed pals, tries to spring Frank "Jelly" Nash, a safe-cracker. Nash, in the custody of four G-Men and three cops at Union Station in K.C., Mo., ends up dead, as do a G-Man and three cops.
1932—The Senate votes not to pay bonuses owed to thousands of Great War vets massed outside the Capitol, setting the stage for a violent rout.
1775—At Bunker Hill, using powder pilfered from Portsmouth's Fort William and Mary, New Hampshiremen under Gen. John Stark—and some others, of course—kill one of every four British Army officers in America.

8:38 8:53 2:22 2:28

Tuesday, June 18

2023—Philips Exeter alumnus Stockton Rush and four clients die when *Titan* is crushed near the *Titanic*.
2009—Manchester Mayor Frank Guinta steps over a man with a leg broken in a brawl to exit the Fish & Game Social Club before EMTs arrive.
1989—RIP I.F. Stone, legendary journalist who said, "Every government is run by liars and nothing they say should be believed."
1984—Talk show host Alan Berg is machine-gunned to death in his Denver driveway by white supremacists.
1971—Assistant Attorney General William Rehnquist seeks an injunction to keep the *Washington Post* from publishing the Pentagon Papers.
1965—Operation Arc Light begins: 27 B-52s fly from Guam to bomb the 'Nam. Two collide and crash due to navigational errors, a third goes down after in-flight refueling fails.
1954—Fred C. Trump is grilled about war profiteering from the FHA.
1954—A CIA army invades Guatemala to topple democratically-elected President Jacobo Árbenz and make the place safe for the United Fruit Co.
1948—Truman OKs plausibly-deniable propaganda, sabotage, demolition, & economic warfare by the CIA.
1869—*New York Times* founder Henry J. Raymond dies of a stroke at 49 while entertaining his mistress.
1865—Top Virginia slaveholder Edmund Ruffin wraps up in a Confederate flag and blows his brains out.

9:28 9:36 3:12 3:14

Wednesday, June 19

2006—Publisher and Bush appointee Phillip Merrill is discovered shot and weighted down in Chesapeake Bay where the CIA's Bill Colby and John Paisley ended up; all suicides, though.
1969—Tobar, Nev.—named for a sign pointing to a saloon—is dealt a death blow by an exploding railroad car full of bombs en route to Vietnam.
1968—"The Green Berets" is released. *The New Yorker* calls it "unspeakable… stupid…rotten…false in every detail."
1965—Thousands of funlovers at The Weirs throw rocks at cops and burn overturned cars. The N.H. National Guard peppers them with birdshot as Laconia's Riot Squad arrests 150.
1954—Warned by Sen. Styles Bridges (R-N.H.) that his son's homosexuality would be exposed if he did not resign, Sen. Lester C. Hunt (D-Wyo.) shoots himself dead in his Senate office.
1953—Julius and Ethel Rosenberg become the first native-born Americans executed for espionage.
1947—Crewman Gene Roddenberry pulls passengers from a crashed Pan Am plane burning in the Libyan desert. He fends off looting Berbers, then hikes out and brings back rescuers.
1893—Lizzie Borden gets off.
1879—Gen. Wm. T. Sherman, at the Michigan Military Academy, tells his audience, "There is many a boy here today who looks on war as all glory, but, boys, it is all hell."
1865—Slaves in Texas learn they're free; now this date is "Juneteenth."

10:15 10:18 3:58 3:38

Thursday, June 20

2022—Fox's Larry Kudlow, referring to Joe Biden, asks ex-Veep Mike Pence if he's "ever seen a president who refuses to accept blame, and…commits so many falsehoods?" Pence replies, "Never in my lifetime."
2005—Veep Dick "Dick" Cheney explains to Larry King that the insurgency in Iraq is "in the last throes."
1953—Lt. Gen. John W. "Iron Mike" O'Daniel arrives in Saigon to confer with French General Henri Navarre on how to bring peace to Vietnam.
1947—Standing up for labor, President Harry S Truman vetoes the anti-union Taft-Hartley Act.
1943—A three-day race riot begins in Detroit; 34 die, 25 of them Black, 17 of whom are killed by white cops.
1942—Four prisoners in stolen Nazi uniforms drive out Auschwitz's main gate in the commandant's car.
1941—The sub USS *0-9* sinks east of the Isles of Shoals with 33 aboard.
1940—Cops grab the NAACP's Elbert Williams in Brownsville, Tenn. Days later he's dead, no one's charged.
1790—Jefferson, Madison, & Hamilton conspire: a Capitol on the Potomac, and states' debts to be assumed.
1783—Independence Hall is beseiged by 400 disgruntled soldiers demanding their pay. Rather than cough up, Congress flees to Princeton, N.J.
1631—Pirates led by Murad—a Dutchman "gone Turk"—sack Baltimore, in County Cork; its inhabitants end up enslaved in North Africa.

10:59 11:00 4:43 4:41

Friday, June 21

2006—Fox News, citing Sen. Rick Santorum (R-Pa.), reports that WMD have been found in Iraq.
2005—Edgar Ray Killen, 80, is found guilty of manslaughter in the case of Schwerner, Goodman, and Chaney.
2004—*SpaceShipOne* reaches an altitude of 100 kilometers; Mike Melvill becomes the first civilian astronaut.
1989—The U.S. Supreme Court rules that it's legal to burn the U.S. flag.
1964—Michael Schwerner, Andrew Goodman, and James Chaney are murdered in Mississippi by the KKK.
1942—A Japanese sub shells Fort Stevens, Ore., damaging a phone cable.
1935—The top cop busts a cap at a Eureka, Calif. sawmill; chaos ensues, but a jammed machine gun keeps the death toll down to three strikers.
1919—Germans scuttle their captive fleet at Scapa Flow. British sailors shoot nine Germans in lifeboats.
1877—Ten Molly Maguires, miners arrested by private detectives and prosecuted by private attorneys for the coal companies, are hanged by Pennsylvania officials, private executioners apparently being unavailable. Pardons for two arrive minutes too late.
1798—British troops and Hessian mercenaries drive the United Irishmen from Vinegar Hill in County Wexford. Then they rape some women and burn some of the wounded.
1788—New Hampshire ratifies the U.S. Constitution. You're welcome.
1631—RIP John Smith.

11:42 11:42 5:26 5:24

Saturday, June 22

2009—A spokesperson explains the conspicuous absence of South Carolina's GOP Governor: Mark Sanford is "hiking the Appalachian Trail."
2005—Undeterred by futility, the Republican-led House passes a Flag Protection Amendment.®
2004—On the floor of the Senate, Veep Dick "Dick" Cheney tells Sen. Pat Leahy, "Go fuck yourself."
2004—Yet another cash-laden C-130 lands in Iraq; this one carries the biggest load of them all: $2,401,600,000.
2002—Enron execs admit they hid $1.5 billion in illegal profits gouged from California ratepayers.
1977—Nixon's ex-AG John Mitchell begins a 19-month prison sentence.
1972—UPI's Helen Thomas gets a call from Martha Mitchell: "I'm a captive…"; the phone goes dead. On the scene, Nixon's lawyer orders that the AG's wife be sedated by injection.
1970—The 24th Amendment gives 18-year-olds the right to vote.
1969—Ohio's Cuyahoga River ignites, inspiring Randy Newman.
1964—The fun-loving U.S. Supreme Court overturns the Post Office's ban of Henry Miller's *Tropic of Cancer*.
1942—Congress adopts the Flag Code,® thus replacing the embarrassingly Nazi-like "Flag Salute" with FDR's hand-on-heart gesture.
1861—His leg crushed by train wheels while warning his men, Lieut. Charles W. Walker dies in N.J.—the first N.H. officer killed in the war.

12:24 6:09 6:08

Sunday, June 23

2016—To memorialize W.Va.'s worst flooding in 100 years, a burning house is filmed as it floats down a creek.
2008—James Hansen warns Congress about global warming—again.
2005—Roller coaster safety expert Richard H. Brown, 64, dies of injuries received in a fall in his own driveway.
2001—"Dark Winter"—a war game simulation of a smallpox outbreak in the U.S.—shows lack of preparation for a pandemic would result in chaos.
1988—NASA's James Hansen warns Congress it is now 99 percent certain that global warming has begun.
1976—Edwin Walker, former Army General and target of Lee Harvey Oswald, is arrested for fondling an undercover cop in a Dallas men's room.
1972—As Nixon tells the CIA to block the FBI's Watergate sleuths, he is hoist' on his own tape recorder.
1959—As a film adaptation of his book "I Will Spit on Your Graves" is screened in Paris, author Boris Vian stands, yells "These guys are supposed to be American? My ass!," and dies.
1955—Bill Loeb writes in the *Union Leader* that Ike has "done more to destroy the respect, honor and power of the U.S. than any President in its history." He ain't seen nothing yet.
1947—The U.S. Senate puts the screws to labor by overriding Truman's veto of the Taft-Hartley Act.
1914—Debate heats up among Western Federation members in Butte: the miners' union hall is dynamited.

12:25 1:08 6:53 6:54

Monday, June 24

2021—Rudy G's law license finally gets suspended for Rudy-ish behavior.
1994—Hot-dogging during air-show practice, U.S.A.F. Lt. Col. Arthur Holland crashes a B-52 at Fairchild AFB in Washington State.
1986—New York finally disbars Roy Cohn for acting like Roy Cohn.
1971—Nixon's Special Counsel Charles Colson circulates the first White House "Enemies List."
1970—Staging fails on the Kittery side of the Piscataqua River Bridge project. Four men fall 75 feet to their deaths, seven others are injured.
1968—Gen. Earle G. Wheeler, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, tells a Long Island audience, "The enemy has lost whatever chance he had of taking South Vietnam by military force."
1968—Cops and the Guard shut down "Resurrection City U.S.A." in D.C. with dogs and smoke grenades.
1954—Guatemala asks the U.N. to look into the U.S.-backed coup in that country; the U.S. vetoes the proposal.
1943—Racist white U.S. Army officers and M.P.s try to enforce Jim Crow law in Bamber Bridge, England. Locals and Black G.I.s fight back; one person dies, shot in the back.
1924—The Democratic National Convention begins. It ends 17 days later, having voted down an anti-Klan plank.
1902—Deadline looming, Joseph Conrad upsets an oil lamp and accidentally burns the second installment of *The End of the Tether*.

1:11 1:53 7:38 7:43

Tuesday, June 25

2013—The Supreme Court rips out the guts of the Voting Rights Act.
2005—"I could kill someone with this," says Vladimir Putin, as he pockets Bob Kraft's Super Bowl ring.
1998—The Fed OKs the Travelers/Citicorp merger: the fuse is lit.
1996—Al-Qaeda kills 19 U.S. servicemen in Saudi Arabia and wounds 372. Saudis and the CIA blame Iran.
1973—Ex-White House Counsel John Dean, on live TV, blows the big whistle on his crooked former boss.
1971—ITT lobbyist Dita M. Beard writes a memo noting that Pres. Richard "Dick" Nixon knew ITT was giving the Republican National Committee a $400,000 bribe to get a favorable Justice Dept. decision.
1969—Defense Secretary Mel Laird gives National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger a menu of options Richard Nixon might use in dealing with North Korea; included: 47 nukes.
1962—God is expelled from U.S. schools by the Supreme Court.
1938—FDR signs a bill establishing a minimum wage and a 44-hour week, and outlawing child labor.
1914—A factory full of volatile chemicals explodes in Salem, Mass. The ensuing fire burns 1,376 buildings and leaves 18,000 homeless or jobless.
1876—Five companies of the 7th Cavalry, including Gen. Custer and two of his brothers, and an AP reporter, are killed by Native Americans near the Little Big Horn River.

1:58 2:41 8:24 8:34

Wednesday, June 26

2015—The Supreme Court puts an end to marriage discrimination.
2008—The Supreme Court says never mind militias—the 2nd Amendment gives gun rights to individuals. It also says concealed weapons may require licenses—that, everyone ignores.
2006—As Rush Limbaugh returns from the Dominican Republic—a sex-tourism mecca—customs officers confiscate his illicit stash of Viagra.
2002—A Federal court edits "under God" out of the Pledge of Allegiance.
1995—EPA workers dismantle David Hahn's homemade backyard nuclear reactor. The Michigander is 17.
1976—Gov. Kit Bond rescinds a predecessor's "Extermination Order" banning Mormons from Missouri.
1954—Bao Dai, the feckless puppet Emperor of South Vietnam, appoints Ngo Dinh Diem as premier.
1947—Boston Mayor James Curley goes to federal prison for five months.
1943—While loading rocks onto a horse-drawn wagon in Caribou, Maine, four adults and a boy are killed by a crashing B-26 "Widowmaker."
1940—At the Waldorf in NYC, Gerhard Westrick hosts a gala celebration of the Fall of France to Nazi Germany. His former law partner, future Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, defends Westrick from critics.
1919—Dist. Atty. and future Congressman T. Webber Wilson cheers on a crowd of 10,000 at the lynching of John Hartfield in Ellisville, Miss.

2:49 3:31 9:13 9:28

Thursday, June 27

2018—Donald Trump's banker's father announces he's creating a vacancy on the Supreme Court by retiring.
2015—Ten days after the Charleston Massacre, Bree Newsom scales a pole at the South Carolina State House and removes the Confederate battle flag.
2006—Pinkos in the Senate block a Flag Protection Amendment.®
2003—The "Do Not Call" list signs up 735,000 people on Day One.
2000—"Until I'm the President," says George W.[MD] Bush, "it's going to be hard for me to verify that I think I'll be more effective."
1995—Days after Rep. John Boehner [R-Ohio] hands out checks from tobacco lobbyists on the floor of the House, a key committee votes to continue tobacco price supports.
1986—Losing *Nicaragua vs. U.S.,* the U.S. tells the International Court of Justice, "You're not the boss of me."
1973—Daniel Schorr learns he's on Nixon's "Enemies List" when he reads it live on CBS News.
1954—U.S.-backed rebels napalm a British cargo ship while overthrowing Guatemala's democratic government.
1950—President Syngman Rhee, our ally, orders South Korean MPs to eliminate leftists. Thousands are massacred; Rhee blames commies.
1863—"Old Douglas," a pack camel imported a decade earlier by Jefferson Davis, is killed by a Yankee sharpshooter during the Seige of Vicksburg. Starving rebels eat his remains.

3:42 4:24 10:03 10:26

Friday, June 28

2018—A Trump supporter with a grudge and a shotgun kills five in the *Capital Gazette* [Md.] newsroom.
2009—Stephen Hawking throws a party for time travelers. No one shows.
2005—Operation Red Wings goes sideways: 19 U.S. special operators die in Afghanistan's Korengal Valley, including Daniel R. Healy of Exeter, N.H. It's the greatest single loss for U.S. special ops since WW II.
1994—The Department of Energy admits hundreds of U.S. citizens were used as unwitting guinea pigs in radiation experiments during the Cold War.
1975—Rod Serling enters another dimension….
1972—Nixon says no new draftees will be sent to Vietnam, further eroding an anti-war movement already weakened by the lottery.
1971—Muhammad Ali's conviction for draft evasion is overturned.
1969—Gays and lesbians battle cops at the Stonewall Inn in N.Y.C.
1957—At 295 Broome St., New York City's last known opium den is busted.
1943—The Sub-chaser *PC-815* fires target rounds at the Coronado Islands, off San Diego; Mexican Coast Guardsmen stationed there object. The ship's captain, Lt. L. Ron Hubbard [yes, him] is relieved of duty.
1689—Retaliating for a massacre he conducted 13 years earlier, Abenakis kill Maj. Richard Waldron of Dover with his own sword; 22 other Anglos die, too, and 29 are sold into slavery.

4:39 5:19 10:56 11:27

Saturday, June 29

2016—The 477-foot tanker *Chem Venus* runs aground off Goat Island, damaging itself and three boats at the Kittery Point Yacht Club.
2006—"It was not always certain," says President George W.[MD] Bush, "that the U.S. and America would have a close relationship."
1989—*The Washington Times* reports that high officials in the Reagan & Bush I administrations are under investigation for involvement in a homosexual prostitution ring. Quickly and conveniently, the story evaporates.
1987—"We don't care," declares Attorney General Ed "Meese is a Pig" Meese, "about the political or ideological allegiances of a prospective judge." His audience bursts out laughing.
1966—U.S. planes begin bombing Hanoi and Haiphong harbor.
1956—The U.S. Federal Highway Act OK's 42,500 miles of new highway so the Pentagon can move stuff around if the Cold War turns hot.
1940—The Smith Act is enacted: all aliens resident in the U.S. must register with the government.
1914—AP: "Archduke's Death Removes Danger of European Conflict."
1620—Tobacco growing is banned in England, conveniently giving the Virginia Company a lucrative monopoly.
1613—A theatrical cannon throws off sparks during a performance of Shakespeare's "Henry VIII." A fire starts, and the Globe Theater burns to the ground.

5:40 6:16 11:50

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