

The Fortnightly Rant

The MAG-Apocalypse is Here

It is hard to believe—but then, what isn't these days?

Just two weeks ago we were marveling in this space about petty little things like the loosey-goosey antics of our so-called national security community. Already we are nostalgic for those simpler, less stressful times.

Now, the MAG-Apocalypse is here. It began on Liberation Day, April 2nd. "Liberation" may seem an odd word to use while introducing blanket restrictions on global trade, but the Vatican had dibs on "The Annunciation." Speaking of infallibility, Wikipedia says the "announcement of the order marked the beginning of a global trade war and triggered a global stock market crash."

The Rose Garden event was modestly characterized by the guy who cooked it up as "one of the most important days in American history." That was quickly proven to be true—even a blind pig can find a truffle once in a while—but not in a good way.

The alleged president's catastrophic frontal assault on the global economy demands attention. After all, it will have an effect on the general ability of run-of-the-mill humans to obtain such trifles as food, potable water, and shelter from the elements. Those luxuries are all on the table now, and subject to the will of the elusive and unindictable "invisible hand of the market," formerly known, we suspect, as the Golden Calf.

We must be brief though. Important though it is, a possible global depression is not the only current event demanding our attention.

We paid closer than usual attention to the New York Stock Exchange on Monday, April 7th, when the consequences of the new tariff regime began to truly sink in.

It was the third straight trading day of cratering prices. The Dow immediately lost about 1,100 points.

At 10:15, right wing yakker Erick Erickson tweeted, "Trump considering a 90 day pause in tariffs. Markets going up." The Dow shot back up on this reported sighting of sanity.

Whoops! The White House's New Hampshire-born spokes-Barbie told CNBC that the first glimmer of good news to emerge during from Trump's second term was, in fact, "fake news." The Dow dove again.

Whoa! Simultaneous with Erickson's erroneous tweet, the guy who started the global trade war fired off a tweet of his own. Incensed that China had done exactly as any sane person would have predicted, and imposed retaliatory tariffs, our so-called president got in touch with his inner spoiled four-year-old brat, bumped up tariffs on China by another 50 percent, and shut down

trade talks with the Celestial Kingdom.

To those across the country expressing their shock and dismay, the erstwhile leader of the free world tweeted this reassurance: "...Don't be Weak! Don't be Stupid!..."

That was last week. Now it's all ancient history. This past Wednesday, a *USA Today* headline read, "White House's 245% tariff figure for some Chinese products causes confusion." Yeah, no kidding. Cynics noted that the market gyrations provided a perfect opportunity for insider trading.

Exciting as it is, the pending collapse of the global economy isn't the only show in town. Remember, we're still operating under the Bannon doctrine. "The zone"—which by now has apparently come to include every inhabited hectare of Earth's surface, as well as those atmospheric heights above them, attainable only by space-brained billionaires—has been duly "flooded with [digestive byproduct]."

Civil liberties, voting rights, public health, education, racial justice, environmental protection... it's impossible to list everything under attack from the brown shirts. It would be easier to say what has escaped their attention, if only we could come up with an example. Two things in particular, though, cry out for denunciation.

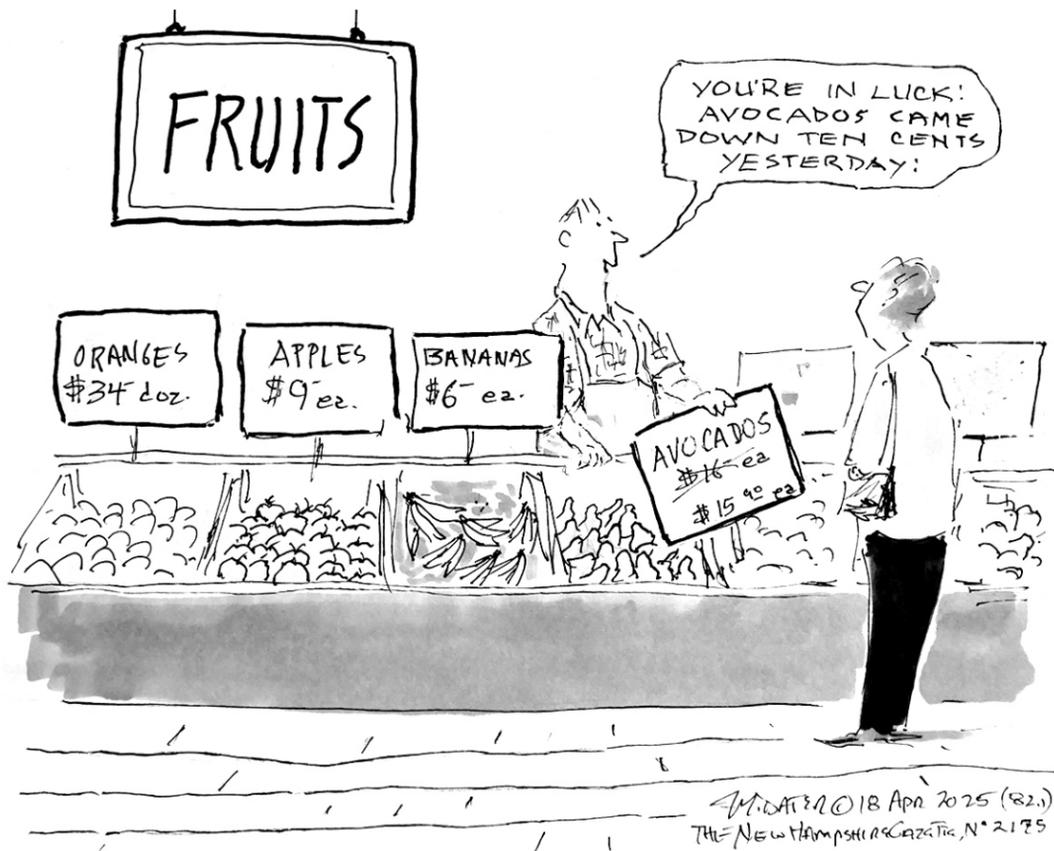
The president's Diet Coke button is back. The walls and fireplace of the Oval Office have been tarted up with a bunch of gold-plated doodads. He has set the stage for his next great exploit: establishing his right to kidnap U.S. citizens and deport them to foreign prisons.

Meanwhile, his ketamine-loving sidekick Musk has been busy. His cybersnoops have been tinkering with Social Security's computers, and, according to a whistleblower, pilfering data from the National Labor Relations Board. Could be quite useful, for a union-buster.

When we began reporting on this country it comprised thirteen disparate colonies. We continued as they banded together under the Articles of Confederation. We published the arguments which led to the adoption of the Constitution. Through Civil War, foreign adventure, and the rise to world dominance, we have followed its progress.

We are now clearly going in the opposite direction, and at a frightening speed. Where once we looked to the Federalist Papers, nowadays the relevant tomes seem to be Looney Tunes scripts by Chuck Jones, particularly those featuring Wile E. Coyote and Roadrunner.

What shall we do? What else can we do? Just keep on keeping on, with a wary eye trained upward for any falling safes branded "Acme."



Egg Prices and the Pentagon Budget: A Tax Day Lament

by Lindsay Koshgarian

Each year for Tax Day, my colleagues and I at the Institute for Policy Studies release a tax receipt so you can learn where your taxes are actually going.

This year, you may be more worried about the price of eggs than your tax dollars. But with President Donald Trump now urging a \$1 trillion military budget, it's worth thinking about what we're already spending.

Last year, the average taxpayer paid \$3,707 for weapons and wars. That's the equivalent of 628 dozen eggs. So if you thought buying a dozen or two a week for your family was taxing, well, that's just the beginning.

Yet the president and his allies in Congress are planning on spending more for war and mass deportations—and less on just about everything else.

And it is a war budget, make no mistake. President Trump has escalated bombing in Yemen and doubled down on providing weapons to Israel, raising the chances of a new, full-blown Middle East war.

The president is also flirting with war with China, both through his trade war but also more directly. Much of the Pentagon's future spending is in preparation for a war with China.

Meanwhile, Elon Musk and DOGE are supposed to save money. But look at what they're cutting: The average taxpayer paid just \$39 for USAID last year, the international aid program that DOGE eliminated. For the cost of just six dozen eggs per taxpayer, it saved millions of lives—including millions of children who are now at risk.

DOGE and the president have fired staff and cut programs at the

National Institutes of Health that conduct lifesaving cancer research. To discover those cures, the average taxpayer paid \$149 in 2024—about 25 dozen eggs. Not a bad investment to help treat cancer.

The president also eliminated a program for museum and library funding for which the average taxpayer paid just \$1.43 in 2024—about three eggs. And the president is dismantling an agency called the Interagency Council on Homelessness that coordinates services to help end homelessness, for which the average taxpayer paid just one penny in 2024.

These are just average figures, so those with lower incomes are paying far less for these things. Either way, these aren't the kinds of cuts you'd make if you were really looking to get the best bang for your buck.

Instead, you might start with weapons contractors. In 2024, the average taxpayer paid \$1,430 for Pentagon contractors—the equivalent of 242 dozen eggs.

One of those contractors is SpaceX, Elon Musk's company. Indeed, SpaceX is benefiting from new Pentagon contracts while Musk takes his chainsaw to cancer research and homeless services. Taxpayers are directly subsidizing the world's wealthiest man even as he cuts programs for the poorest people on Earth.

Naturally, a \$1 trillion Pentagon budget will open the floodgates for more money for contractors, who already get over half the Pentagon budget each year. Cutting that planned \$1 trillion by 10 percent could pay to avert GOP plans to cut \$1 trillion from Medicaid and food stamps over the next 10 years.

Or you could skip the president's plans for mass deportations and detentions of immigrants. At \$98 for the average taxpayer in 2024, this amount is set to balloon as Congress prepares billions in new funding for

the president's deportations of students, fathers, mothers, and even a U.S. citizen child seeking emergency cancer treatment.

The U.S. needs humane and commonsense immigration law, not an indiscriminate dragnet that scapegoats even legal residents for problems they had no role in creating. We could put that money back into threatened services like the NIH, local libraries, and ending homelessness—or all of the above, given how comparatively cheap those things are.

With many Americans struggling to afford the price of eggs, health care, and housing, the government can and should help with those real problems instead of creating new ones with new wars and new mass deportation plans.

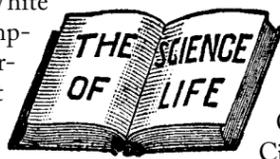
Lindsay Koshgarian directs the National Priorities Project at the Institute for Policy Studies. This column was distributed by OtherWords.

BETTER OLD NEWS THAN NEW LIES

Another New Hampshire Murder

At Lyman, on the night of April 18th, Orrin Steere had his hat knocked off and his head blown to pieces by a charge of shot fired through a window of his house, where he was sitting by the stove. The only other occupants of the house at the time were Steere's wife and her brother, Louis Williams, and they say they know nothing about the murder. Steere and Williams had been in Lisbon that day, and both were thoroughly drunk; they both belonged to a gang of six or eight ruffians who have long been the terror of the town.

Better Old News
to page two



Organized Labor's Best Defense is a Good Offense

by Denton Cohen

Don't let Donald Trump's cozy relationship with Teamsters President Sean O'Brien fool you. The new administration is a bunch of scabs—union busters of the highest order, cut from the same cloth as the radically anti-worker Reagans and Thatchers of the world.

In his frenetic and destructive first few months back in office, Donald Trump has pursued a sweeping set of anti-worker and anti-union executive actions that have our country's oligarchs salivating. Here is a small and disturbing sampling of Trump administration actions:

- Fired hundreds of thousands of unionized federal workers across dozens of federal departments and agencies, many of them illegally.

- Illegally nullified the Transportation Security Administration's union contract and ended collective bargaining for thousands of federal workers, ominous first steps in the right-wing plot to destroy public sector unions entirely.

- Started an unlawful campaign to stack the National Labor Relations Board with anti-labor zealots.

- Elevated Elon Musk—an openly corrupt oligarch and notorious union-buster currently suing to rule

the NLRB unconstitutional—to the very highest level of decisionmaking authority in his administration.

- Began an illegal and authoritarian crackdown on the right to free speech and free assembly—indispensably important union rights protected by the Constitution.

- Opened up a new privatization front targeting Social Security, the U.S. Postal Service, and other federal agencies and programs that employ thousands of union workers and serve millions of working families.

In the midst of this overwhelming onslaught of anti-union action, some in the labor movement might be tempted to retreat—to cut our losses and hope that we get a friendlier administration and more favorable political environment in four years. Like millions of union workers across this country who recognize what's at stake here, I believe this would be a terrible mistake. Our best defense is a good offense.

Rather than sheltering dues in rainy day funds or freezing hiring during this uncertain time, unions should pour resources into new organizing. I know from my time as a United Auto Workers (UAW) member organizing the first-ever private sector grad worker union on the West Coast that new organizing

takes a real institutional commitment. It takes hiring talented and dedicated member-organizers to staff campaigns, spending money on training and leadership development programs, and funding the nuts and bolts of new organizing campaigns like legal representation and organizing materials.

Unfortunately, as longtime union researcher and activist Chris Bohner has written, most labor unions have largely eschewed new organizing in recent years, even as union war chests have grown to record levels. This has to change.

Investing in new organizing is the single most strategically sound decision unions can make in order to build power.

First, organized labor is historically popular right now. In a time when nearly every type of institution is hitting record lows in approval ratings, unions are at their highest level of popularity since the New Deal era. At the same time, traditionally anti-union institutions like corporations as well as mainstream institutions are losing the faith of the public. Labor can and should use this in its favor.

Additionally, some of the fastest growing sectors in terms of union density, such as the nonprofit sector, higher education, and healthcare, are among those being targeted systematically by the Trump administration and its oligarch backers. Now is the time for labor to keep its foot on the gas and redouble its efforts to organize new workers and workplaces in these sectors.

New organizing can also catalyze people's faith in democracy and inspire broader efforts to resist oligarchic power grabs. While the Democratic Party and the news me-



Armed National Guardsmen protect General Motors property at Flint, Michigan, February, 1937. UAW sit-down strikers prevailed nonetheless.

dia largely fail to meet the moment, organized labor can and must fill the void through organizing new workers and workplaces. What better way to spark democratic resistance than a series of new organizing campaigns that deliver material gains for workers and agitate workers to engage in mass action such as sick-outs, protests, and recognition strikes?

This most basic expression of democratic willpower—harnessing “people power” to force change rather than beg for it—is the labor movement's bread and butter, and it's precisely what everyday people need to see modeled for them in order to not feel powerless. The Trump administration, following the terrifying blueprint of Project 2025, hopes that by causing maximum chaos and using state power to sow destruction on as many fronts as possible, the broad anti-fascist coalition that opposes its unpopular and authoritarian actions will fall into disarray and adopt a defensive posture. Instead, the effort to save our democracy must take a page out of

Trump's chaos playbook and deploy every tactic in the book to fight back.

By organizing new workplaces, we can tie up the time and resources of anti-union entities and actors in the short term while growing our membership and financial resources to build for the medium and long term. If other lines of defense fail, a mass labor stoppage can be the only thing preventing a plunge into full-blown authoritarianism.

Union density is still on the decline, and current density is far too low to pull off anything on the level of an effective general strike—and the bad guys know it. As union organizers know, having a credible strike threat is the foundation of any union's ability to win its demands. We have to organize new workers, and fast.

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Denton Cohen is a labor organizer and public policy researcher based in Los Angeles. This content licensed under a Creative Commons 3.0 License

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Our Wandering Photographer happened across the Skeleton family recently, just hanging out on the porch—literally, in the case of their cute little pet bat. (Yes, he's had his shots.) It was a serendipitous reminder that Beltane is right around the corner. To honor that occasion, the ghouls behind the Portsmouth Halloween Parade have organized a “Halfway to Halloween Party: May the 4th Edition” event at the Corner Pub in Kittery. For details, see: <https://www.facebook.com/share/1E9h6FmJt3/>.



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BETTER OLD NEWS THAN NEW LIES

Better Old News

from page one

The old depot of the Wabash & Michigan railroad at Urbana, Ohio, was blown up with dynamite at about midnight on the 16th inst. The citizens have long demanded better depot facilities, and it is supposed they took this method of ob-

taining them.

Two women in a Corsican village, between whom a bitter hatred had long existed, recently fought out their quarrel in a duel with stilettos. When the word was given they flew at each other like fiends and plied their weapons with mad energy. After a short struggle one of them fell, pierced through the heart.

At Gallatin, Tenn., a mob took Puss Kirkpatrick, a colored woman, from her house and hanged her, on suspicion that she set a fire, and shot her husband dead because he recognized some of the mob.

Emperor Frederick has given orders for the prosecution of all

to next page

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It's Tax Day. You've Paid Your Share, But the Billionaires Haven't

by Amy Hanauer

Today our 2024 taxes are due. You likely had most of your federal taxes deducted from your paychecks throughout the year. This is not true, however, for mega-millionaires and billionaires, some of whom are practically running our government right now. They receive much of their income in the form of appreciation on the stocks of the corporations they run. And the companies themselves use loopholes and deductions to reduce their tax bill, sometimes down to zero.

Take Tesla (please!). The company, valued at over \$1 trillion, paid no federal income tax on its 2024 income of \$2.3 billion. And its CEO, Elon Musk, who had hoarded some \$342 billion in wealth by earlier this year, avoids paying taxes on most of his income until he chooses to "realize" capital gains by selling his enormously appreciated stock.

Because of our overall low taxes, the U.S. does not collect as much revenue as other comparable nations. This means you get a lot less by being an American citizen than you get by being a French, German or Swedish citizen. Less health care, less child care, less access to affordable college.

These low taxes are part of the

reason that America experiences supercharged inequality. While other countries do more to boost people at the bottom and enable upward mobility for the middle class, in the U.S. low taxes combined with an anti-worker, anti-consumer, anti-environment regulatory regime means that here the rich get richer and the rest of us stagnate.

Further, the extreme wealth of the billionaire class often lets them buy the elected officials and the policies they want—usually policies that add further to their riches in a vicious cycle that leaves most of us worse off. President Trump has given Musk the power to fire tens of thousands of workers, eliminate funding for hospitals and universities around the country, and destroy Congressionally-created agencies that carry out vital public functions.

Shutting down special tax breaks for very wealthy individuals and profitable corporations could go a long way to addressing these problems. But Trump and his allies in Congress are moving dramatically in the opposite direction. While they plan to double down on tax cuts that mainly benefit the wealthy, they are also allowing the most destructive billionaire-driven attack we've ever seen on the policies that keep us healthy and safe.

Musk is wielding a chainsaw

against public services using his so-called DOGE ("Department of Government Efficiency" though it's not a government agency and will likely undermine efficiency). DOGE's cuts to services could decimate education, health, and income support. And its cuts to public oversight will enable corporations to more easily exploit us as workers, consumers, and community members.

For example, Trump and Musk are trying to eliminate the Department of Education and slash school budgets in ways that will particularly harm children with disabilities, students in disadvantaged rural and urban schools, and college access for working class kids.

They've fired 10,000 staff members at the Department of Health and Human Services, including those who ensure vaccine distribution, drug safety, and health care access. They've haphazardly slashed funding nationwide for labs conducting medical research on cancer, Alzheimer's disease, maternal health, and more.

They tried to get rid of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), an agency which has recovered more than \$21 billion for consumers from companies that engage in unfair, deceptive, or abusive practices. And they even slashed the

Federal Emergency Management Association which helps communities facing floods, hurricanes, and wildfires, leaving communities unprotected.

Their reasons are three-fold, all bad for regular people:

- Cutting public services can free policymakers to pass expensive tax cuts for the wealthiest people and corporations.

- It can also allow privatization of services so Musk and others can demand payment to provide them.

- Finally by hobbling regulations and firing public employees that safeguard factories, inspect meat, and test drugs, Musk hopes to juice corporate profits as CEOs are permitted to shed factory safety equipment, ignore anti-pollution rules, and violate labor laws.

This doesn't even begin to touch on the crazy on-again, off-again tariffs that are roiling our financial markets and industrial supply chains.

Policymakers of the 20th century created regulations, safety nets, and labor standards that made Americans more educated, more prosperous, and healthier. They didn't work perfectly of course. But education, income, and health improved dramatically over this span.

Educational investments boosted high school attainment rates for

adults from a mere 10 percent in 1910 to 90 percent by 2017. With more education and unionization, inflation-adjusted per capita income went from \$18,460 in 1967 to \$46,193 by 2023. Research and vaccination nearly eradicated polio, smallpox, and measles. And safety standards meant the number of workers killed on the job plummeted from 15.8 to 1.9 per 100,000 between 1928 (when tracking began) and 1998. The big picture: life expectancy at birth nearly doubled (from 46.6 years to 74.7 years) for white men and more than doubled (from 32.5 years to 68.2 years) for Black men between 1900 and the year 2000.

In other words, a regime of relatively robust taxation and reasonable regulation delivered a more educated, healthier, more prosperous America. In 2025, it seems, Trump and those he enables are trying to make American impoverished again by rolling back the 20th century and its accomplishments.

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Amy Hanauer is Executive Director of both the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy and Citizens for Tax Justice. This work is licensed under Creative Commons (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0). Feel free to republish and share widely.

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This is but a part of Portsmouth's contribution to the national "Hands Off" protest on April 5th—too big to take in all at once. Tomorrow, at noon, there will be another protest, possibly even bigger. What better way to observe the 250th Anniversary of the Battles of Lexington and Concord?

BETTER OLD NEWS THAN NEW LIES

from previous page

newspapers insulting the empress. [Frederick III was, at this point, about one-third of the way into his 99-day reign.]

At Ennis, Ireland, the sentences of three tradesmen convicted of boycotting were, on appeal, increased from three to six months' imprisonment.

Mrs. Birdie Grover, one of Buffalo Bill's sharpshooters, who left him in a tiff, was arrested in Queenstown as a dynamiter and had her rifles seized.

The Lisbon Murder

It has been discovered that Orrin Sterry was shot with his own gun, and there is little doubt that he was

murdered by his wife or his brother, Love J. Williams, or both. According to the reports as to their reputation it would do no harm to hang them anyway, whether they committed the murder or not.

The lower vestibule of [the] Music hall [sic] is to be kept clear of hoodlums hereafter during performances. The reform comes none too soon, and all decent people will hope it may last.

Within the memory of living men, lobsters were plenty along the Atlantic coast as far south as New Jersey. Now they are not to be found below Rhode Island. Overfishing did it. This is a fact for the opponents of close-time laws to ponder over.

All sorts of rumors were flying

about the streets Saturday in regard to the [USS] *Swatara*. It was reported that not only had all the cog wheels, steam pipes, piston rods, cylinders, shafts, bearings, connections, boilers and other things belonging to her engine department given out and tumbled to pieces, but that her deck is in such a bad condition that nobody is allowed to wear shoes on board for fear of breaking through, and that it leaks so badly that men when down below have to wear rubber overcoats and carry umbrellas to keep from being drowned...

New Hampshire Gazette
April 26, 1888

Better Old News
to page six

Beware of Cruise Ships
— a Bar Harbor reader

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Murph's Fortnightly Quote
"He who fights with monsters might take care lest he thereby become a monster."
— Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), philosopher

"A group of American and British criminologists have... argued that conspicuous consumption of fossil fuels ought to be classified as a crime."
— Andreas Malm, *How to Blow Up a Pipeline*
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A Grand Panjandrum from Mount Pelerin Accuses Us of Error—or Worse!

At 00:01 a.m., on April 8th, that Tuesday's entries into Admiral Fowle's Piscataqua River Tidal Guide went live at nhgazette.com. At 10:00 a.m.—about the start of the working day for the mandarins who oversee the nation's public discourse—one of those items drew a response. Without further ado, the entry in question, the response it drew, and our rebuttal. — The Ed.

Entry: 1947—Frederick von Hayek, Ludwig von Mises, Milton Friedman, et al. issue a manifesto at Mont Pelerin obfuscating their goal: neo-feudalism.

Response: At best this is not true. At worst it is a lie. I would encourage you to read Mises' book *Liberalism or Human Action* and truly contemplate how his purpose could possibly be to establish neo-feudalism.

Shawn Ritenour

[No town or state provided.]

Shawn:

Thank you for writing. When you left your signed comment online, you modestly neglected to mention your august academic position.

Being less demure, we hasten to boast to our readers that we have just been corrected—or, should we say, lectured at—by “a Senior Fellow of the Mises Institute, [who] teaches economics at Grove City College and is the author of Foundations of Economics: A Christian View and The Economics of Prosperity: Rethinking Economic Growth and Development.”



Ritenour

Shawn's refutation of our assertion regarding neo-feudalism is particularly stimulating because Grove City, the locus of his sinecure, has the honor of holding in its archives the post-1938 papers of Herr Ludwig von Mises himself. It's as if Brigham Young University's faculty had hands-on access to Joseph Smith's Golden Plates.

Von Mises' pre-1938 papers, as we all know, are currently held by the Kremlin. If we might make a suggestion, there might never be a better time to make a deal to bring them all together under one roof. How's your Russian, Shawn?

Whether its custody of those papers proves temporary or permanent, Grove City—founded, as it was, by a filthy-rich oil baron—was certainly a logical place for von Mises to offload the detritus of his career. It is a little ironic, though, considering Mises' low opinion of war and government subsidies. Grove City would likely have sunk during World War II, if the Navy had not kept it afloat by sending sailors there for training in electronics.

Though its economic stance may fairly be viewed as reactionary, in other areas, Grove City has been at the vanguard. Way back in 1962 it violated Professor Larry Gara's tenure, thereby earning itself an academic censure lasting a record 53 years.

But we digress. Were we wrong about the Mont Pelerin gathering? Or did we, as you so rudely put it, lie? It's hard to say, 35 years after “Language, a Key Mechanism of Control” taught Republicans “How to Speak Like Newt.” A one-man Tower of Babel, Newt Gingrich blew up our common language.

You appear to be a Christian. Shakespeare tells us, “even the devil can cite Scripture.” So let us look, together, unto the Bible for guidance. Matthew 7:16 — “By their fruits ye shall know them.”

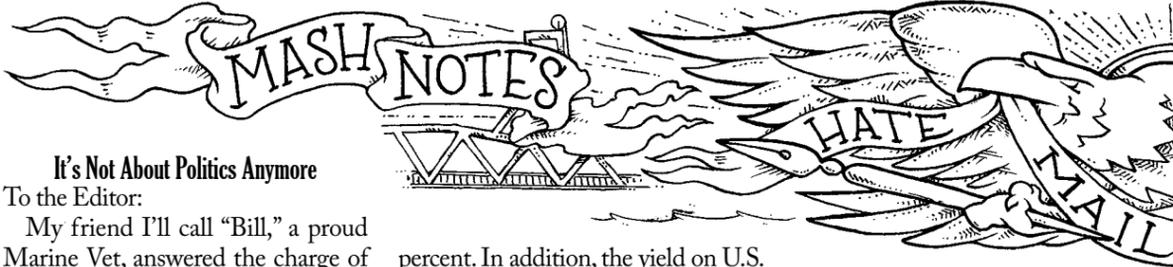
It has been 78 years since that gang of libertarian crackpots gathered at Mont Pelerin to plot humanity's future. With great wealth at their disposal from the very start, they, their followers, and innumerable useful idiots have conspired to conjure up false narratives justifying economic policies designed to further enrich the wealthy at the expense of the poor.

At this very moment the political establishment whose economic gospel you spout is taking food from the mouths of hungry children and worn-out old workers, while cutting taxes on people so wealthy that some of their yachts have enough room on deck to park another yacht.

If that isn't neo-feudalism, then what would you call it?

For far too many, it's Hell on Earth.

The Editor



It's Not About Politics Anymore

To the Editor:

My friend I'll call “Bill,” a proud Marine Vet, answered the charge of talking too much about politics by correcting the record.

He said, “Look, this isn't about politics anymore.” He went on to enumerate a shopping list of ways current events are beginning to impact our daily lives.

“Bill” is right, this madness is existential. Some jokingly say America now has a “King,” but “King-Pin” more aptly describes the acts of theft and extortion we witness daily. So, let's drop this drivel about Republicans vs. Democrats.

It's about right and wrong, and about a feral enemy-within impacting our day-to-day survival.

Who among us who served in the military ever thought it would come to this?

Rick Littlefield
Barrington, N.H.

Rick:

We're old enough to have served with draftees—including some who were Marines. Hard to believe, but it was a thing back then. For the benefit of our younger readers, we'll note that there was a certain amount of disgruntlement in the ranks in those days. The gung-ho and the draftees didn't always see eye-to-eye.

Whatever petty differences we had then would, we suspect, be forgotten now. What's going on before our eyes, under the direction of the White House, is an affront—hell, it's an assault—on the Constitution we swore to defend in the oath that we all took.

The Editor

How Do You Like Them Apples, GOP Govs?

Dear Editor:

Yesterday in response to Trump's far-reaching tariffs hitting over 60 nations, financial markets dropped significantly. The DOW dropped almost 1,700 points, the S&P 500 dropped five percent and Nasdaq dropped four

percent. In addition, the yield on U.S. Treasury bonds fell to 4 percent. Global markets also responded negatively to the tariffs as the threat of a global recession became more ominous. The tariffs were so sweeping that they also included two islands, Heard Island and the McDonald Islands whose only inhabitants are penguins. One of the countries not being hit by tariffs was Russia, while our allies in Europe, Asia, Canada and Mexico were all hit by varying levels of tariffs.

As a result of this unprovoked trade war initiated by Mr. Trump, Americans will be paying a great deal more for many consumer products. All segments of the economy from manufacturing, agriculture, service, tourism and finance will be seriously impacted. It is expected to result in a rise in inflation and unemployment as people are laid off due to the effects of all the turmoil and economic disruption. These tariffs represent the largest peacetime tax hike in U.S. history.

New Hampshire will be significantly impacted as a result of the trade war, especially with our largest trading partner, Canada. Fewer products from New Hampshire will be exported to Canada, and those that are will be impacted by the tariffs Canada has imposed in response to the Trump tariffs. Tourism is expected to see a significant drop as a result of many fewer Canadians as well as tourists from other nations visiting the U.S. and New Hampshire. Each year about 500,000 Canadians visit New Hampshire, however Canada as well as a number of other nations in Europe have issued travel advisories related to travel to the U.S.

It is important to remember that Governor Ayotte and former Governor Chris Sununu supported Mr. Trump for President in 2024. Mr. Sununu supported Trump because, as

he stated, we needed a president “with a Republican mentality.” It will be interesting to see how Gov. Ayotte and Mr. Sununu spin this economic disaster over the next year as Ayotte runs for reelection and Sununu considers a run for the Senate. As Republicans who both supported Mr. Trump they own some responsibility and blame for the pain he is inflicting on New Hampshire people and businesses. So far both have remained conspicuously silent. Will they have the courage to speak out to protect New Hampshire or will they remain silent to protect their own political self-interest?

Rich DiPentima
Portsmouth, N.H.

Rich:

'Tis the season for schadenfreude: lie down with dogs, get up with fleas. Sadly, we all end up getting bit.

The Editor

An Immigrant Saved My Dad's Life

Dear Editor,

I was in Junior High School when my dad got real sick. They took him to UCLA medical center and did a lot of tests. The doctors couldn't figure out what was wrong.

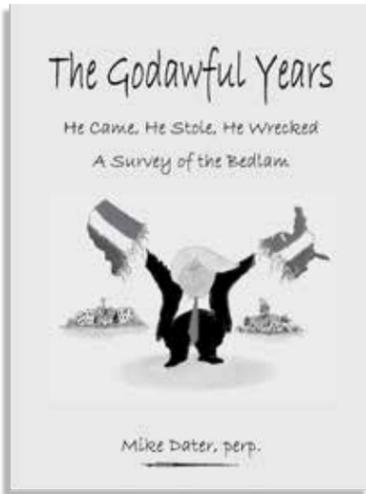
Then a blood test intern who had arrived here from Korea on a student visa suggested a test for some disease that was common in his country but rarely appeared here. That test pointed out the problem. My dad got the appropriate medication, and returned home healthy.

What if trump [sic] had been president and deported the intern?

Our whole country benefits from immigrants from different countries, with different cultures, different religions, different races. Somewhere here, some “different” person has the knowledge and experience to solve a pressing problem.

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a compendium of drawings by Mike Dater most of which first appeared in *The New Hampshire Gazette*
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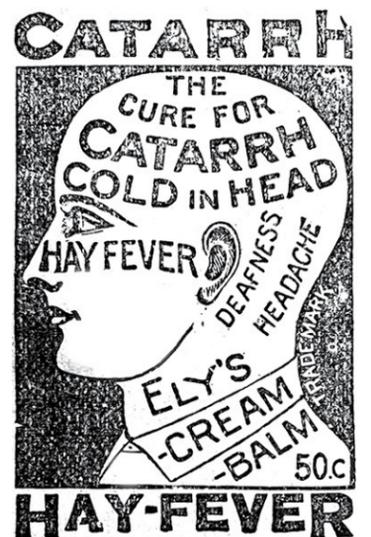
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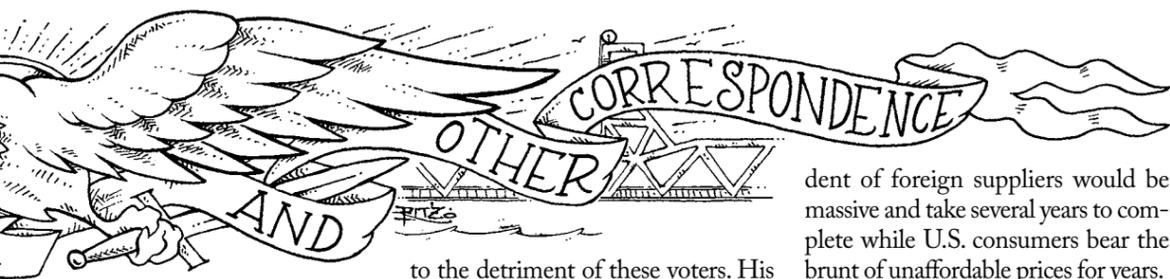
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MAGAVoter's Lament (a pipe dream)

*First they came for the undocumented immigrants,
and I did not speak out because I was happy to get rid of them.*

*Then they came for the foreign students,
and I did not speak out because they were foreign.*

*Then they came for the green card holders,
and I did not speak out because they were taking Americans' jobs.*

*Then they came for the Muslims,
and I did not speak out because they weren't Christians.*

*Then they came for the judges who ruled against them,
and I did not speak out because judges are usually way too liberal.*

*Then they came for the unions,
and I started to get a little nervous.*

*Then they decided that my job was an unnecessary waste of money,
and they fired me.*

*Then they took away my VA benefits, Social Security, and Medicare,
and it dawned on me that I might have a serious problem.*

*Then they came for anyone who spoke out against them,
and I found myself in what we used to call in the Marines "the hurt locker."*

*When they tore up the Constitution and burned the pieces,
I realized I'd never actually read the damned thing.*

*And as the rich white billionaires were stuffing the ashes down my throat,
it finally occurred on me that I had made a terrible mistake.*

*But by then I was screwed,
and there was nothing I could do about it.*

— W.D. Ehrhart

to the detriment of these voters. His tariff policy which includes significant levies on Canada, Mexico, China, all steel and aluminum imports as well as "reciprocal" tariffs will increase prices throughout the economy. Economists estimate that the recent 25 percent tariff on all imported automobiles and auto parts will add from \$3,000 to \$10,000 to the sticker price of cars and trucks sold in the U.S. market. Trump's Treasury Secretary, Scott Bessent, has opined that tariffs will be beneficial because they will wean consumers away from "cheap" imports. The current average price of a new car not including tariffs is approximately \$48,000. Former hedge fund founder Bessent may consider this "cheap," but few working-class citizens will agree. The added costs of tariffs will price out many working- and middle-class buyers from the new car market. Oligarchs will still afford Cybertrucks but for the working class, it's Cuba and 1950 Chevys.

Trump's claim that auto tariffs will bring manufacturing jobs back to the U.S. is questionable. Over the past forty years, auto manufacturing has become a global business characterized by complex and efficient supply chains that link parts manufacturers with assembly plants in several countries. It will be extremely difficult and expensive to break these networks apart and bring all parts supply and assembly into the U.S. The fact is that no car currently sold in the U.S. is entirely made from parts manufactured here; new cars can include up to 40-50 percent foreign-made parts if not more. The construction of an all-American auto industry would be an extremely complex and expensive undertaking. It can take three to four years to build an auto assembly plant and cost billions of dollars. The investment needed to re-create an auto industry indepen-

dent of foreign suppliers would be massive and take several years to complete while U.S. consumers bear the brunt of unaffordable prices for years.

As Trump cluelessly enacts policies that will raise prices and decrease wealth for the American consumer, his obtuse minion Elon Musk continues his misguided rampage through the federal bureaucracy. His mindless cuts will affect most agencies, but the most severe damage will be to the provision of social services. Musk has called Social Security a "Ponzi scheme" and has made the ludicrous assertion that "millions" of dead people are collecting Social Security payments. DOGE has targeted Social Security as well as Medicaid and veteran's benefits with debilitating cuts. These services support the very group of voters that helped to elect Trump. The disruption of social services will directly affect the welfare of lower- and middle-class Americans. What will be MAGA's reaction when Social Security checks fail to arrive, and health care benefits disappear?

Given the chaos and prevarication of the current Trump administration, it is impossible to discern what it will do next. One thing, however, seems clear—their actions will not benefit the working and middle classes. Whatever savings are made by Draconian cuts to government services and the collection of tariff taxes will likely be used to support tax cuts for the rich. Never in American history has the wealth gap been greater between the working classes and the economically elite. Never has the need for the average citizen to protest been greater.

Robert D. Russell, Ph.D.

Harrisburg, Pa.

Robert:

There it is. How many times have we waited, to no avail, for some official big-wig to "finally nail the bastards"? It's time to turn out, again and again, and keep at it no matter what. They can't jail us all.

The Editor

Corruption? Ineptitude? Why Not Both?

Dear Editor,

A failed businessman responsible for six bankruptcies, trump [sic, passim] has, nevertheless, proven to be an expert market manipulator. Markets plunged 10 percent April 3rd and 4th in response to his steadfast resolve to raise tariffs. Then they jumped nearly the same amount April 8th and 9th as he delayed the tariffs for 90 days. How many of trump's associates, or even trump himself, bought up stocks April 7th, when they were low, and unloaded them now, to score a tidy, effortless profit?

While this reeks of insider-trading and governmental corruption, some would shrug with, "the markets aren't the economy." But rapid policy fluctuations do more than manipulate the markets; they degrade our national economy. Our economic supremacy is built on trust, honesty, and consistency

that gives investors confidence their reasons for investing here will continue as anticipated. Trump's manipulations create uncertainty which lowers our status as a safe investment country.

Bruce Joffe
Piedmont, Calif.

Bruce:

His followers believe Trump when he says he's "a stable genius." Personally, we think he's a horse's ass and belongs in a stable.

That said, we do suspect he might be capable of scratching his ego's itch at the same time he's manipulating the markets to swell his bank account.

The Editor

====

Trillions Are Available to the U.S. Treasury

Dear Editor:

Why didn't Donald Trump ask me

Mash Notes, Hate Mail, &c.

to page six

We need to maintain an Inclusive Society. Don't let MAGA deportation policies take away the special sauce that makes America truly great. Trump's policies wreck and weaken our country.

Bruce Joffe
Piedmont, Calif.

Bruce:

Trump's policies make us think of the children of Lake Wobegon, but in reverse, and as written by George Orwell—they're all stupid, but some are more stupid than others.

Thanks for this reminder that anti-immigrant hysteria doesn't just hurt the immigrants.

The Editor

====

This is Robin Hood In Reverse

To the Editor:

The sources of Trump's election victory have been well documented. His base is largely comprised of disaffected white working-class voters, resentful of their economic displacement by globalization and technology and feeling neglected after the 2008 Great Recession. Added to this group is a large contingent of dissatisfied Evangelicals who perceive a loss of moral legitimacy due to Progressive policies related to abortion and LGBTQ issues. But what brought victory to Trump in 2024 was a slice of Black, Hispanic and young voters whose primary concerns were inflation and affordability of basic goods. The common denominator among these groups, apart from the Evangelicals, is a concern for economic issues. They are working class or lower middle-class people, many of whom work paycheck to paycheck. Their priorities are the costs of basics such as food, shelter, cars and medical care.

It is curious that the priorities of Trump's first several weeks in office act

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from page five

where to find tens of trillions for the U.S. government coffers? Why haven't Democrats come forth daily and vociferously with specific, vetted numbers on the trillions that should be available to our government and honest tax paying citizens? Oh wait, we all probably know the answers to those queries. But here's a letter to my congressman and senators. If you agree, send such a letter to yours.

Dear Madam or Sir: Numbers vary a tad depending on sources, but rounding up or ball-parking we all lose something like \$7-8 trillion to off-shore asset stashing by individuals and corporations. We lose another nearly \$9 trillion to the ultra-wealthy's untaxed income. We lose nearly \$700 billion from those who don't pay in a timely manner. We lose another trillion in tax cheats. Then more difficult to unearth are all the handouts I call Corpfare (Corporate Welfare)—subsidies, favors, harder to detect loopholes, special deals, etc.

I propose all those politicians interested in finding funds to reduce debt and pay for programs that help honest Americans who are not in the top 10 percent establish an independent panel of maybe three to five professionals with high credibility in their fields (and no political or partisan axes to grind) to look into the above tax codes and other grotesque giveaways to the wealthy. Maybe include a top tax lawyer, a top CPA who knows all the intricacies of federal systems and codes, a top economics-finance academic, etc. Meanwhile, have that panel appoint a small, equally high-credentialed group to look into waste and fraud in government. Start with DOD (not USAID or the EPA) and go from there. Best to keep politicians off the investigatory panels. Let the panelists come up with great efficiency (i.e., under tight deadlines) solutions to rectify the situation. Present the results to Congress and the American people at once in a joint session of Congress, televised and beamed through every media



channel available.

Instead, we get a money-grubbing, jumpy Elon-Bot taking a wrecking ball to the agencies and departments of the federal government (including programs the American people have been paying into for decades and programs protecting public health) so that Trump can allow yet further breaks and giveaways to the wealthy. Are we all mad and compliant? Or did we just happen to elect a Mad-King we are allowing to destroy whatever was good at home and in the post-war international order?

Bob Begiebing
Newfields, N.H.

Bob:

No modern Republicans—and damn few Democrats—will back a project that, to succeed, would have to call in mortar fire on their own campaign finance base.

The Editor

====

Anti-DEI is Pro-White Supremacy

Dear Editor:

100 days into Trump's 2nd swat at being President—I carefully choose "swat"—we see his unorthodox and harmful actions. A July, 2024, article available online is titled: "What a 2nd Trump Term Could Mean for Media." Now a March 30, 2025, headline is: "Trump Is Using the Power of Government to Punish Opponents." In his target list are "prominent cultural institutions, legal establishments, academia, media, judiciary." His anger directly causes harm. He likes to intimidate. He threatens with pulling back Congressionally-passed funding, including research dollars, a biggie for any institution.

Today, as I write, his physical exam is scheduled. It should include a mental acuity test. He's 79 this year. We might learn a cause for his slapdash attitude about tariffs and his off-hand way of saying, "We'll see what happens," and then it's off to more golf, while the world's fi-

nancial institutions stagger.

I don't want our UNH system, including community colleges, and other efforts respected by most, to be bullied into setting aside considerations of diversity, equity, inclusiveness. Those abstract words are about leaving behind old, white supremacy practices. His orders against DEI efforts have no place in educational certification standards. Our public school administrators shouldn't get those threats either.

Lynn Rudmin Chong
Sanbornton, N.H.

====

Extortion by Any Other Name Still Stinks

Dear Editor:

Extortion is defined as the use of force or threats to compel another person into providing money or property, or using force or threats to compel a public official to perform or neglect an official act or duty.

Over the past few weeks we have seen Donald Trump use his powers of executive orders, the Justice Department (DOJ), and withholding funds to get law firms, universities and even the Mayor of New York City to comply with his demands and to give him things of value. He has issued executive orders against a number of law firms who defended people Trump considered his enemies or had lawyers who worked on cases that resulted in his being indicted. These orders removed the security clearances and prohibited some lawyers of these firms from entering federal buildings. However, Trump agreed to remove the orders if these firms would agree to his demands and even provide millions of dollars of pro bono legal services to Trump allies. Trump also

had the DOJ drop federal charges against New York Mayor Eric Adams in return for him supporting Trump's migrant deportation program. Fortunately, a federal judge derailed Trump's plan by dropping the charges and prohibiting the DOJ from reinstating those charges in the future. Trump has also used the withholding of millions of dollars in grants and other support to universities if they did not comply with his policies on free speech, and DEI. And, as Trump's own son indicated, he will use his tariffs as a tool to pressure individual nations and industries to make concessions to him in return for removing or lowering a tariff from a particular nation or industry. As Eric Trump said, "I wouldn't want to be the last country that tries to negotiate a trade deal with @realDonaldTrump."

Some may call this "hardball politics" but there is a legal term for it as well.

Rich DiPentima
Portsmouth, N.H.

Rich:

In a nation of laws, #47 would be getting impeached for what you so rightly call extortion. In the nation we're live in, that ain't happening. This goes well beyond extortion, though.

As we write this, on Monday, the so-called President seems hell-bent on telling the Supreme Court to go pound sand.

We are in uncharted waters.

The Editor

====

What's In A Name? Democracy!

To the Editor:

Given the decline of the world economy, and general malaise, it may be difficult to capture your attention here. However, a threat exists that is

critical to your rights and freedom as an American.

Born Doris Rollins (1) in Laco-
nia, her surname changed to Had-
dock (2) upon marriage, and later
as a voting-rights advocate legally
changed to Doris "Granny D" Had-
dock (3). Ironically, on three counts
she, and others similarly situated,
could be prohibited from voting un-
der Trump's recent executive order,
or the pending Republican congres-
sional SAVE act (a deceptive title).

Low-income Americans, low-information voters, the young, Americans of color, Democrats, Republicans, first-time registrants, sporadic voters, American military and voters abroad, women whose birth certificates do not match their married names, students, elders, could be turned away at the polls, because approximately 40 percent of Americans do not possess the documentation required to comply with Trump's fiat, or the abovementioned deceptive legislation. And most are not yet aware of a recent, very restrictive New Hampshire voting law.

All of this in service to the Big Lie of voter fraud. Granite Staters can make the lie go away by reminding your elected officials what surveys already indicate, that you have confidence in our local election workers and in vote results. In June, contact Governor Ayotte to remind her that voting is not a privilege; rather, it is an explicit, fundamental N.H. right, not one to be sullied by specious regulation.

Gov. Ayotte: (603) 271-2121.

Bob Perry
Strafford, N.H.

Bob:

"Granny D"—there could be no more inspiring example with which to make this important point.

Thanks for writing.

The Editor

====

BETTER OLD NEWS THAN NEW LIES

from page three

Standard Oil

At Washington, April 26th, State Senator Lewis Emery of Bradford, Penn., testified before the house "trust" investigation committee that practically all the independent oil refineries had been wiped out between 1872 and 1879 by reason of the rebates given the Standard Oil Co. and its predecessor, the Southern Improvement company, by the railroads. The independent competitive refineries in 1872 numbered 250, and only four or five were in existence in 1879. A computation made by [the] witness showed that the Standard had received over \$10,000,000 in rebates in seven-

teen and a half months from the four principal railroads leading from the oil fields. The witness said it was his opinion that the railroad men were interested in these drawbacks, and made hundreds of thousands of dollars a year out of them. "Had they all had their deserts," continued the witness, "they would be in state prison today." The witness said there was no valid business reason why these rebates should be given, and it was a gross injustice to the stockholders of the railroads. The amount of rebates given the Standard, he certainly thought, amounted in the aggregate to over \$100,000,000, and had all the railroads treated all shippers alike, it was his belief that they would now be in receipt of an

annual income of from \$15,000,000 to \$20,000,000 greater than they receive at present. No wonder that Standard Oil was able to buy up the democratic legislature of Ohio, and send itself to the United States senate, labelled [Henry B.] Payne.

Mrs. Sterry and her brother have been bound over for trial to next November for the murder of Orrin Sterry, at Lisbon.

On Sunday, April 22nd, a party of log-drivers in Baraga county, Mich., attempted to thaw out some dynamite over a cook stove in their shanty. The result was a terrific explosion which killed three men and badly hurt two others.

to next page

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Trump is bringing patriotism back into vogue for the rest of us

by Jean Stimmell

Winter is losing its grip. Even the chunks of snow that slid off my north-facing roof are almost gone. The daffodils have pushed up through matted oak leaves, and the ice went out early on Jenness Pond. It's a time of renewal not only for Mother Nature but also for our democracy. Since his inauguration in January, President Trump has given it his best shot to destroy our country.

But he will fail!

As the opposition, we were flabbergasted by the audacity of Trump's attacks on our Constitution and institutions starting on day one. We were initially struck dumb, but once it sunk in, his outrageous actions became rocket fuel, igniting us into action.

But first, a personal note: a brief return to Trump's first term to explain how he restored my patriotism. It took Trump's first brutal, authoritarian reign to open my eyes—long shuttered by my country's often unsavory and unjust behavior—to see how special, despite its flaws, our country is.

At an emotional level, I was infuriated that Trump was able to wrap himself in the flag, anointing himself as America's supreme patriot despite dumping on our constitution and our soldiers. Even more irking, he was AWOL in the war I fought in because of his lame excuse that he was physically unfit to serve because

of bone spurs, despite being a star athlete in high school.

My war was a bad war, but I did my duty. Meanwhile, while Viet Cong sappers almost sank my ship on the Mekong River, killing 23 brave Americans, he was bragging that his actions were more dangerous than Vietnam: sleeping around with so many women during the AIDS epidemic.

Donald's gift to me was to take me back to my youthful idealism, which had motivated me to enlist to fight in Vietnam. President JFK's words inspired me: "Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country."¹

That's my tale of how Trump's shameless wrapping himself in the American flag restored my patriotism; it prompted me to buy a large American flag, which I have flown proudly ever since until it was ripped to shreds by a recent winter storm. It was a harbinger of things to come that the flag should self-destruct right as Trump began his second term.

Now, back to the present.

Since his inaugural, I have bought a replacement flag and am flying it proudly. It doesn't seem possible, but our new president has doubled down on his crusade of destruction, ransacking our institutions, eliminating essential safety nets, and gutting our constitution.

But, thankfully, we have now regained our mojo.

We are standing tall again after

being sucker punched in the gut. As the respected journalist James Fallows observed, "Americans as individuals seem suddenly willing in larger numbers to 'meet the moment.'" More and more people are acting as they might sometime be asked, "What did you do, when it mattered?" And they'll have an answer."²

We, the people, are now standing up to fight for the kind of country we want to live in. Bernie Sanders and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's recent tour "Fighting Oligarchy" has drawn enthusiastic crowds, including an estimated 34,000 in Denver.³

And on Saturday, April 5th, we had a day of rage with over 1200 protests in every state across our country. Here at home, as the *Concord Monitor* reported: "This was the sixth protest in Concord since Trump took office and was the largest by far, with organizers estimating that more than 2,000 people attended."⁴

On Fifth Avenue in Manhattan, the protest stretched for nearly 20 blocks. In Chicago, thousands flooded Daley Plaza and adjacent streets, while, in the nation's capital, tens of thousands surrounded the

Washington Monument.⁴ Nearly 100,000 angry demonstrators gathered in Boston.⁵

After the signing of the U.S. Constitution in 1787, Benjamin Franklin was asked, "What sort of government have you given us? A republic or a monarchy?" Franklin's response: "A republic, if you can keep it." He understood that democracies are fragile and can't survive without the vigilant oversight of its citizens.

I had shamefully forgotten the idealism and courage it took to build our nation. It required clear thinking, tolerance, patience, and perspective. As Tom Edmondson wrote in a letter to the *Washington Post*: "Throughout all time and across the face of the Earth, ours is the only nation not founded on ethnicity, territory, or religion. Ours is the only nation in human history founded on ideas, ideals, and a system of government."⁶

These qualities that our forebearers sacrificed their lives for are desperately needed today to preserve their sparkling achievement. We saw an example of such idealism last Saturday.

====

Jean Stimmell lives in Northwood.

1 <https://www.jfklibrary.org/learn/education/teachers/curricular-resources/ask-not-what-your-country-can-do-for-you>
 2 <https://fallows.substack.com/p/standing-up-it-looks-like-this>
 3 <https://www.cbsnews.com/colorado/news/thousands-attend-bernie-sanders-aoc-rally-denver-push-progressive-change/>
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 5 <https://www.cbsnews.com/boston/news/hands-off-protest-boston-massachusetts>
 6 <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/interactive/2025/patrick-henry-revolutionary-war-virginia/>

BETTER OLD NEWS THAN NEW LIES

from previous page

A Louisiana lady who was once famous for her wealth and the number of her slaves now earns a few cents a day by picking cotton on the plantation that was her own before the war.

At O'Fallon, Mo., April 28th, Ernest Kleeschulte, who two years ago deserted his wife and two children, went to their wretched home, murdered them all, and then blew out the place where his brains would have been located had he possessed any.

The Alarm, the official publication of the Chicago anarchists, suspended publication April 28th. The alien bummers find it hard work crowding the theories of European criminals down the throats of American working men.

The injury to USS *Swatara's* reversing gear had been repaired; it was of a very simple character, and called for no such talk as was created.

A new flag has been furnished the

collector of the port by the department at Washington, to fly from the custom house staff. The old one was in a used-up state long ago.

North Carolina has no cities. Wilmington, its largest town, has only 19,000 people.

Capt. Jinks, a notorious horse thief, was killed by a posse at Wichita, Kansas, April 29th. Three members of his gang were hanged by vigilantes several weeks ago.

At Chicago, Ill., some fifteen conductors of street cars have been discharged for "beating" the companies. They were in the habit of using a bell called the "brother-in-law," and it is alleged that one conductor stole as much as \$6 a day.

Rev. Edgar L. Hermance, long pastor of the Presbyterian church, Broadway, New York, one of the richest churches in the city, shot himself in the pulpit after service Monday, April 29th, and died in a short time.

Intense indignation has been aroused throughout New Brunswick

Portsmouth Democrats Morning Coffee Meet-Up
Friday, April 25th, 8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.
 The Coffee Meet Up!! Morning get together. Enjoy a cup of coffee! Drop in and meet your fellow Dems. Of course, bring a friend (s)! A social time! I am sure we will have plenty to talk about! Parking available. For location please call Brian at (603) 988-9998.

by the action of the supreme court judges in sentencing John T. Hawke, editor of the *Moncton Transcript* to prison for two months and a fine of \$200 for criticising the acts and conduct of some of the judges of the bench. Hawke, who is fighting for liberty of the press, has expressed his determination to lie in jail until his bones rot before he will apologize or pay the fine. John V. Ellis, editor of the *Globe* and a member of the parliament from St. John city, has also been adjudged guilty by the New Brunswick court, and is to be sentenced in June. The *Globe* says editorially that the supreme court of New Brunswick practically undertakes to do what the Queen of England cannot—punish one of her majesty's subjects by fine or imprisonment by her own mere motion.

A prominent railroad official says

fully fifty thousand tramps continually infest the railroad lines of the country. They are a constant menace to the safety of travellers as well as to the property of the companies, as many of them do not hesitate to cause accidents by turning switches, burning bridges, and other devices. It is estimated that three thousand of them are killed annually while attempting to steal rides or walking on the track.

Charles I. Debaun, assistant cashier of the National Park bank of New York, is a thief to the tune of \$100,000.

New Hampshire Gazette
 May 3, 1888

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Our thanks to the Portsmouth Athenaeum, holder of the newspapers from which the items above were excerpted. — The Ed.

Trump and Musk Aren't Reforming Our Government, They're Sabotaging It

by Jim Hightower

As Trump & Co. hurl horror after horror at us from the murky darkness of their extremely wasteful "war on government waste," I think of Lily Tomlin, who said years ago: "No matter how cynical you get, it's almost impossible to keep up."

But no need to swat frantically at their every assault. Their blitzkrieg against everything at once is an intentional ploy to divide us into small, separate scrambles to save this and that, rather than rallying a unified, furious opposition to them. The evil is not in the budget cuts, but in the cutters.

Second, let's be clear that their war-on-waste is *not* about eliminating useless taxpayer expenditures. Note that Elon Musk, Trump's silly "efficiency czar," ignores such walloping waste as Pentagon boondoggles and tax scams for überrich hucksters... like him.

But—by gollyies!—those budget-whacking plutocrats are fearless when it comes to killing essential benefits for regular people. A long-standing energy program, for example, helps very-low-income families across America pay to heat their homes in bitter winters, and to cool homes in areas of brutal heat. It saves lives—efficiently!—being administered by a staff of only 25. But this month, Trump's government reform thugs stormed in, fired all 25, and shut down the program. As Sen. Ed Markey said, "This isn't reform. It's sabotage."

Exactly! Soft words like "efficiency" are their knives for castrating government of, by, and for The People, allowing a cabal of Trump, Musk, and allied financial elites to impose a moneyed monarchy over America. But remember our history—we democratic rebels won all-out wars in the 1770s and 1860s to defeat them. So, toughen up, here they come again.

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