

The Fortnightly Rant

What the Hell is Going On?

The only thing we can say with certainty, fourteen months into what ought to be called the Dunning-Kruger administration,* is that nobody knows what the hell is going on.

We, its subjects, formerly known as “we the people,” certainly do not. Granted, there do seem to be two broad schools of thought about what’s going on, but their positions are diametrically opposed. If one school is right, then the other must be wrong.

According to the conventional view of our tripartite form of self-government, an undefined “fourth estate” ought to be acting like a beacon, cutting through the fog, helping us to understand current events. However, thanks to our capitalistic economy—the pinnacle of mankind’s achievements, according to many, so essential and so universally accepted that merely calling attention to its presence is, in most situations, considered gauche, *déclassé*, and a vulgar *faux pas*—each of these schools may now call upon its own array of “news” sources to buttress their positions.

For some run-of-the-mill Americans, this is not much of a problem. They know where they stand. They are right, the others are wrong. Mere facts—if such quaint things could still be had—would not weaken their passionate intensity. Some others, of course, may lack this level of conviction.

Fortunately, neither side in this stalemate needs to be embarrassed by uncertainty, or even error. In our democratic republic, making decisions about war, peace, and the economy is not their responsibility. Their lot is simply to provide the raw material for the nation’s most important industry, the manufacture of consent.

So the people at large have every right—perhaps even a duty—to be confused and ignorant. They even, as Senator Warren Rudman [R-N.H.] so memorably said while dressing down Ollie North [Lt-Col., U.S.M.C., Ret.], “have a right to be wrong.” What should alarm the average American, though, is the growing body of evidence which suggests that no one in a position of real power has any idea what the hell is going on—and that is the optimistic assessment.

* Wikipedia: “The Dunning-Kruger effect is a cognitive bias that describes the systematic tendency of people with low ability in a specific area to give overly positive assessments of this ability.” David Dunning: “Not knowing the scope of your own ignorance is part of the human condition. The problem with it is we see it in other people, and we don’t see it in ourselves. The first rule of the Dunning-Kruger club is you don’t know you’re a member of the Dunning-Kruger club.”

Our news desk, such as it is, is confronted dozens of times a day with a veritable tornado of calamitous events we would never have guessed were possible. No newspaper large enough to catalog them all has been published for more than 38 years.†

Setting aside lesser issues such as putting a brain worm sufferer in charge of our health care, terrorizing a huge swath of workers without whom our economy cannot function, and the obvious, ongoing campaign to rig future elections so that these suicidal policies may not be reversed, let us focus on the single project most likely to resolve all our worries through the admittedly less-than-optimal route of nuclear annihilation: the war against Iran.

Much as we might like to, we cannot lay the inception of this problem on the person whose junk mail is addressed to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. He was only seven at the time. His hero Winston Churchill, along with some British spies, anti-democratic Iranians, oil company executives, and the CIA, are to blame for that.

More than 70 years later the game is much the same: a top priority is to maintain access to enough oil to keep your war machine running in the defense of capitalism.

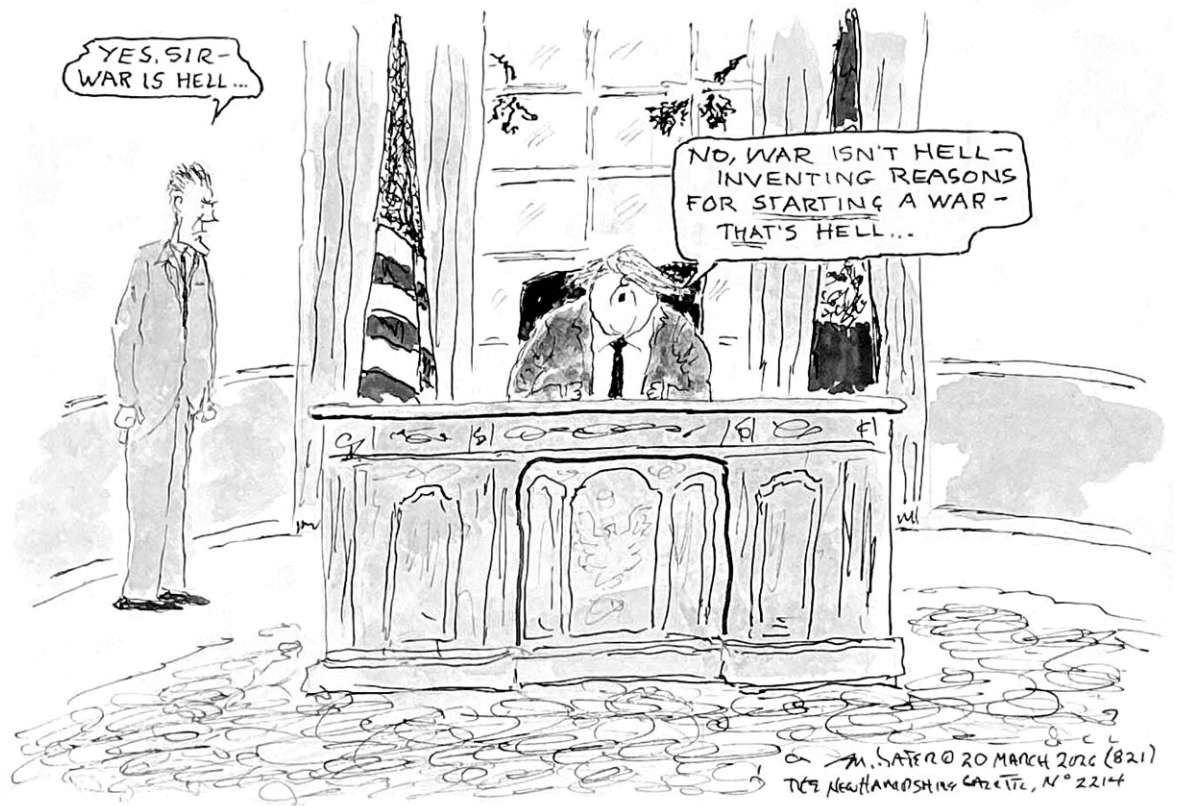
Since a full-blown SKYNET system is still a gleam in the eye of our billionaire tech-bro overlords, there remains a need for meat-based cannon fodder. For that reason, these elemental facts have to be dressed up in palatable, abstract verbiage: defense of freedom and democracy, yada, yada, yada. Armed forces recruitment was hard enough in the old days, even with the draft. Maintaining this “all volunteer” Department of War requires some real effort on the propaganda front.

This was the status quo when the person in the gilded office decided he was going to kick the hornet’s nest. As is his wont, he has given the public a handful of reasons for why he did it. Being the anti-Washington, though, he cannot tell the truth. All we can do is guess.

According to news reports, he is surprised that he has shut off one-fifth of the world’s oil supply. He also claims to be surprised that, after insulting foreign leaders and denigrating our alliances with them, they are declining to follow him—that is, us—down the primrose path to ruin.

Is he intentionally trying to destroy us? That seems unlikely. It seems prudent to wonder, though, who’s whispering in his ear.

† “The most massive single issue of a newspaper was the 13 September 1987 edition of the *Sunday New York Times*, which weighed more than 5.4 kg (12 lb) and contained 1,612 pages.” — *Guinness Book of World Records*.



After Helping Convince Trump to Attack Iran, Kushner Solicits Billions for His Private Equity Firm

by Jake Johnson

Jared Kushner, U.S. President Donald Trump’s son-in-law, is reportedly trying to entice governments in the Middle East to invest billions in his private equity firm while he simultaneously works as “a special envoy for peace”—a role he appears to have used to help convince Trump to wage war on Iran.

The *New York Times* reported late last week that Kushner “has spoken with potential investors in recent weeks about raising \$5 billion or more for Affinity Partners, his investment firm.”

Citing five unnamed people with knowledge of the talks, the *Times* reported that “Affinity’s representatives have already met with Saudi Arabia’s Public Investment Fund,” Affinity’s largest investor. Saudi Arabia’s leader, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, reportedly played a significant role in the behind-the-scenes lobbying campaign urging Trump to attack Iran—Saudi Arabia’s top regional rival.

Bin Salman controls the Saudi Public Investment Fund, which pumped \$2 billion into Kushner’s firm in 2022.

“Mr. Kushner’s fundraising is expected to stretch on for the better part of this year,” the *Times* added. “The efforts show the blurring of the lines between public service and private profit-seeking during Mr. Trump’s second term. Only a few weeks ago, in his role as Mr. Trump’s ‘peace envoy,’ Mr. Kushner met in Geneva with Iran’s foreign minister. The U.S. and Israeli bombing campaign in Iran began shortly after those meetings concluded without a deal on Iran’s nuclear program.”

Last week, Trump said he decided to attack Iran in coordination with Israel—whose prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, is a personal friend of Kushner’s—because the president “thought they were going

to attack us,” a view he claimed to have reached after listening to “what Steve [Witkoff] and Jared and Pete [Hegseth] and others were telling me.”

U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) wrote in response to the *Times* reporting that “while U.S. servicemembers die in another forever war in the Middle East, Donald Trump’s ‘peace envoy’ is raising money for his private equity firm.”

Abbas Araghchi, Iran’s foreign minister, wrote in a social media post on Sunday that a “fair and equitable deal” between the U.S. and Iran “was within reach” before Trump and Netanyahu started bombing.

“Those providing poor advice to POTUS are responsible for bloodshed,” Araghchi wrote, attaching a screenshot of the *Times* story on Kushner’s fundraising efforts. “This war is imposed on both Americans and Iranians.”

Judd Legum, founder and author of the Popular Information newsletter, noted last week that Kushner’s participation in the Geneva diplomatic talks that preceded the U.S.-Israeli assault on Iran “violated his pledge not to be involved in foreign policy in a second Trump administration.”

On Monday, Legum observed that Kushner also said in December 2024 that his private equity firm would not “have to raise capital for

the next four years,” allowing him to “avoid any conflicts” of interest.

Trump formally named Kushner a “special envoy for peace” last month, a move that means the president’s son-in-law is now required by law to file a financial disclosure report. Kushner has just days left before the 30-day deadline to file the disclosure.

Donald Sherman, president and CEO of Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, wrote in a letter to the White House last week that “Mr. Kushner’s history of financial gains resulting from his time as a White House advisor during President Trump’s first term raises serious concerns about potential conflicts of interest that must be addressed before Mr. Kushner participates in any additional matters that may relate to his own financial interests or those of his investors.”

“The risk of Mr. Kushner’s potential conflicts is particularly concerning because his private investment firm has very publicly done significant business with foreign partners who also have interests in the conflicts on which he has been assigned to work,” Sherman noted.

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).

BETTER OLD NEWS THAN NEW LIES

- John Jones, fifty-four years old, died in Cambridge, Mass., March 23d, of starvation and cold.
- Mrs. John Owens was so badly burned at Maynard, Mass., while taking a rum sweat for a cold, that she died shortly after.
- Last Saturday, a boy while in the woods in the town of Monroe, Me., discovered a portion of the body of a man in a maple tree.
- A petition thrown into the carriage

of Queen Victoria by a deranged discharged soldier, while the queen was being driven in Hyde Park on Wednesday, the 24th ult., caused quite a stir in London.

• Ed Johnson killed his employer near Oakland, Neb., and then intrenched himself in a barn and opened a fusilade on his pursuers,

Trump's FCC Chair Threatens to Pull Broadcast Licenses Over Negative Iran War Coverage

by Olivia Rosane

In a move one administration critic described as “fragantly unconstitutional,” Federal Communications Commission Chair Brendan Carr wrote a post on social media on Saturday that appeared to threaten the broadcast license of any media outlet that reported information concerning President Donald Trump’s war on Iran that the president did not like.

“Broadcasters that are running hoaxes and news distortions—also known as the fake news—have a chance now to correct course before their license renewals come up. The law is clear. Broadcasters must operate in the public interest, and they will lose their licenses if they do not,” Carr’s message began.

Carr also shared a screenshot of a Trump post on Truth Social complaining about “Fake News Media” coverage of five U.S. Air Force refueling planes that were reportedly hit and damaged in an Iranian missile strike on Prince Sultan air base in Saudi Arabia.

“[This] is the federal government telling news stations to provide favorable coverage of the war or their licenses will be pulled,” wrote Sen. Chris Murphy (D-Conn.) on social media in response to the post. “A truly extraordinary moment. We aren’t on the verge of a totalitarian takeover. WE ARE IN THE MIDDLE OF IT. Act like it.”

Several other media professionals, free speech advocates, and Democratic politicians understood Carr’s post as a threat.

“The FCC is threatening the licenses of news stations that report on the effects of Iranian attacks on the American military,” wrote journalist Séamus Malekafzali.

Bulwark economics editor Catherine Rampell wrote, “FCC Chair Brendan Carr threatens broadcast licenses over Iran War coverage.”

Journalist Sam Stein posted, “The state doesn’t like the war coverage, threatens the license of the broadcasters.”

Independent news network *MediasTouch* wrote: “Brendan Carr is threatening the media to cover the war the way the Trump regime wants. It’s one of the most anti-American messages ever posted by a government official.”

“The truth is this war has been a failure of historic proportions. They don’t want Americans to know that,” the group continued.

Several pointed out that such a threat would be in violation of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which guarantees freedom of speech and of the press.

“Constitutional law 101: It’s illegal for the government to censor free speech it just doesn’t like about Trump’s Iran war,” Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) posted on social media. “This threat is straight out of the authoritarian playbook.”

Sen. Mark Kelly (D-Ariz.), who has faced scrutiny from the administration for advising service members to disobey illegal orders, wrote: “When our nation is at war it is critical that the press is free to report without government interference. It is literally in the Constitution. This is overreach by the FCC because this administration doesn’t like the microscope and doesn’t want to be held accountable.”

California Gov. Gavin Newsom wrote, “If Trump doesn’t like your coverage of the war, his FCC will pull your broadcast license. That is flagrantly unconstitutional.”

Aaron Terr, the director of public advocacy at the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression, said: “The president’s hand-picked misinformation czar is at it again, singling out ‘fake news’ that conflicts with his boss’ political agenda. The First Amendment doesn’t allow the government to censor information about the war it’s waging.”

Free Press senior director of strategy and communications Timothy Karr responded to Carr with a screenshot of the First Amendment and the words: “Here it is—as it seems you’ve forgotten what you swore an oath to ‘support and defend.’”

This is not the first time that Carr has been accused of putting his loyalty to Trump over his duty to the Constitution. In September, he

pressured ABC to take comedian Jimmy Kimmel off the air over remarks Kimmel had made following the murder of Charlie Kirk.

While ABC eventually reinstated Kimmel’s show following public backlash, free speech advocates warned at the time that the Trump administration would not stop trying to censor opposing views.

“The Trump regime’s war on free speech is no joke—and it’s not over,” *Free Press* co-CEO Craig Aaron said at the time.

Indeed, Sen. Brian Schatz (D-Hawaii) wrote of Carr’s Saturday statement: “This is worse than the comedian stuff, and by a lot. The stakes here are much higher. He’s not talking about late night shows, he’s talking about how a war is covered.”

Carr’s note comes at a particularly urgent time for independent media coverage in the U.S., as Paramount Skydance, which is run by the son

of pro-Trump billionaire Larry Ellison, is set to acquire Warner Bros. Discovery, which owns CNN. The Trump administration has often criticized CNN’s coverage, including of the war.

On Friday, Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth told reporters, “The sooner David Ellison takes over that network, the better,” as he complained about a CNN report on how the Pentagon underestimated the risk that Iran would close the Strait of Hormuz in response to U.S. aggression.

Carr has already spoken out in favor of the merger, telling CNBC he thought it was a “good deal, and I think it should get through pretty quickly.”

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Next Portsmouth Democratic Roundtable March 24

New Time: 6:00 p.m.

C o-Sponsored by the Portsmouth Democrats and the Seacoast Friends Preserving Democracy (SFPD), the monthly Portsmouth Democratic Roundtable is held on the 4th Tuesday of each month, from 6:00-8:00 p.m., at a local restaurant in Portsmouth.

March’s Roundtable will be held next Tuesday, the 24th. Call or contact Peter Somssich for the location. The Roundtable is an opportunity to socialize with Democrats and other

friends without any agenda or rigid structure. New residents of Portsmouth are welcome to meet those involved in the Portsmouth Democrats and learn of opportunities to get involved, suggest new ideas, or be supportive of planned initiatives. Next month the Roundtable will be on May 26th.

For information or questions please contact Peter Somssich at (603) 436-5382 (no texts, please.) or peter.somssich@gmail.com. or Brian Wazlaw at (603) 988-9998, or briwazlaw@aol.com Website: <https://seacoastfriends.org>.

BETTER OLD NEWS THAN NEW LIES

from page one

killing two men and wounding three others. The barn was finally set on fire, and when Johnson attempted to escape the blockaders made a lead mine of his body.

- The skeleton of a man found in a tree in the town of Monroe, Maine, is thought to be that of Foster Page of Winterport, who disappeared after shooting Augustus Clark in Winterport, about three years ago. Clark recovered.

- The appropriation committee of the Connecticut legislature has reported in favor of granting Mrs. Prudence Crandall Philleo an annuity of \$400. This is the Prudence Crandall who was driven from Canterbury by a mob in 1833 for teaching colored children.

- Charles Brown, the man who threw the letter of appeal into the queen’s carriage, has been released from jail by royal command.

- William P. Sturtevant, an old gentleman of seventy, was awakened by a burglar in his house in Centre Harbor, N.H., on the evening of March 21st. He followed the burglar a mile through the snow, captured him, and made him give back fifteen dollars and a pocket-book he had stolen.

- A bald eagle seized an eight-year-old boy at Manheim, N.Y., and tugged at him until beaten off by farm hands.

- William Gay of Norwood, Mass, aged fifteen years, dropped dead while on his way home from school on Friday night last.

- A.N. Kellogg, originator of the

“patent inside” newspaper system, who had established large offices in Chicago and Cleveland, is dead.

- The Pittsfield, Mass., Knights of Labor have admitted a colored member after some discussion, he being the first colored man admitted in western Massachusetts.

- “A fricasee of frauds,” is what Mr. [Roscoe] Conkling calls the Broadway surface railroad development, as it was spread before the New York assembly last week. Mr. Conkling ought to know, for he seems to have cooked the aldermanic goose to a turn recently.

- **Police Court** — George F. Dixon managed in some inexplicable manner to get rum in this city on Sunday, and made the fact apparent by

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It’s amazing what human ingenuity can accomplish. What had been a few acres of scruffy and unproductive wasteland, harboring nothing of interest but the remnants of a 19th century railroad turntable and the spooky ruins of a few brick buildings, is well on its way to becoming a sort of human beehive. All it took was imagination, concrete, tons of oriented strand board, a formidable supply of money, and a crack team of lawyers.

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“Our data on the U.S.A. goes back to 1789. What we’re seeing now is the most severe magnitude of democratic backsliding ever in the country.”

Trump Is Dismantling U.S. Democracy at a Speed ‘Unprecedented in Modern History’: Watchdog

by Brad Reed

A report released on Tuesday by the V-Dem Institute at the University of Gothenburg in Sweden has found that President Donald Trump and his administration are dismantling democracy in the U.S. at a speed that “is unprecedented in modern history.”

In its report, V-Dem categorizes the first year of Trump’s second term as “a rapid and aggressive concentration of powers in the presidency.”

In fact, V-Dem says that the Trump administration has accomplished in just one year what most budding autocracies take a decade to achieve, adding that “the speed of decline is comparable to some *coups d’état*.”

Of particular concern is the failure of the legislative branch of the U.S. government to apply any kind of oversight or check upon the executive branch, the report explains.

“The Republican-controlled Congress seems to have abdicated its constitutional role in favor of the executive branch, ceding significant legislative, fiscal, and oversight powers during 2025,” the report says. “The Trump administration has de-

facto repeatedly taken over the Congressional ‘power of the purse’—enshrined in the Constitution and in the 1974 Impoundment Control Act—unilaterally cancelling or reallocating federal funding.”

The report also points fingers at the U.S. Senate for repeatedly rolling over and confirming unqualified Trump nominees, which it says is tantamount to letting the White House “sideline” the upper chamber’s authority altogether.

V-Dem goes on to document the administration’s repeated assaults on the judicial branch and the rule of law in general during his second term, starting when Trump issued a mass pardon to more than 1,500 alleged or convicted criminals who stormed the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021.

Since then, the administration has waged a pressure campaign against judges who rule against it consisting of “impeachment resolutions and misconduct complaints,” while also using executive orders to punish major law firms simply for representing the president’s political enemies in court.

The lone bright spot in U.S. democracy, says V-Dem, is that the

administration has not yet been able to attack states’ powers to administer their own elections, although not for lack of effort.

“Actions taken in 2025 raise concerns regarding the integrity of the 2026 midterms,” the report warns. “This primarily concerns attempts to assert federal control over election processes, which must be decentralized and state-run, according to the Constitution.”

The report notes that Trump has issued an executive order that attempts to override states’ election laws by restricting mail-in voting and mandating voter IDs at polling places nationwide, but adds that “many provisions of this order have been blocked and others are still being challenged in federal court.”

In an interview with *The Guardian*, V-Dem founder Staffan Lindberg used historical context to explain why Trump’s assault on U.S. democracy is truly without precedent.

A Dispatch from the Clams!

“Clamshell Alliance, formed in the 1970s, is still resisting nuclear power.

“We call on all activists to carry NO KINGS! NO NUKES! on March 28th.

“March 28 is the next No Kings Day. It is also the 47th anniversary of the nuclear disaster at Three Mile Island. We want to bring this message to millions of people: Remember Three Mile Island. Deadly radiation and mass evacuations from the March 28, 1979, nuclear power



How distressing! [Clutches pearls.] Another sticker insulting the dignity of our Commander-in-Chief has turned up on Islington Street. This one is located some 1,000 feet to the west of the first, reported on in our February 6th paper. What must a President do to command respect?

“Our data on the U.S.A. goes back to 1789,” he said. “What we’re seeing now is the most severe magnitude of democratic backsliding ever in the country.”

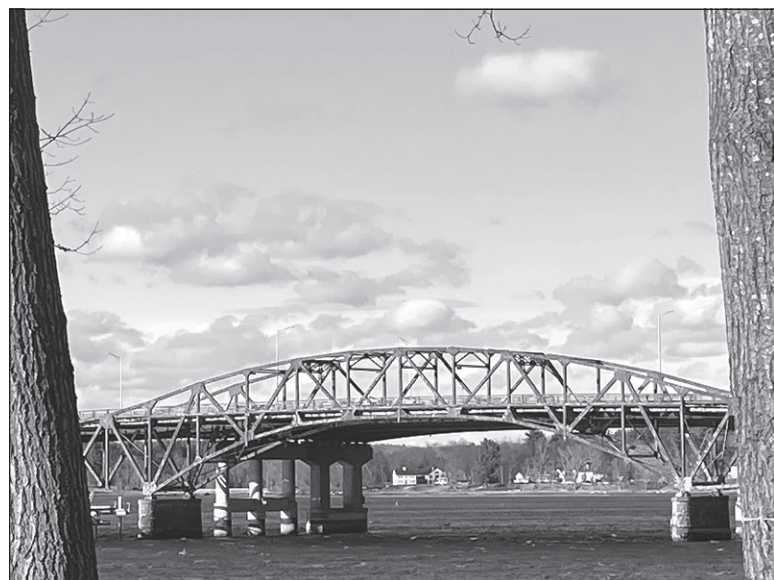
He also said that other authoritarian leaders have taken much more time in ripping down their states’ democratic institutions than Trump has.

“For Orbán in Hungary, it took about four years,” Lindberg said, “for

Vučić in Serbia, it took eight years, and for Erdoğan in Turkey and Modi in India, it took about 10 years to accomplish the suppression of democratic institutions that Trump has achieved in only one year.”

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In an unusual display of initiative, our Wandering Photographer moseyed over to Newington recently to memorialize the General Sullivan Bridge. The ninety-one year old structure will soon be demolished. Since it was built before mankind started monkeying around with nuclear weapons, the steel from which it’s made can be classified as low-background, or pre-atomic, making it useful for certain specialized applications: scientific instruments and medical devices, for example. For reasons beyond our own understanding, we’ve asked the contractor whether that fact will be taken into account when the scrap is sold. Curiosity—it’s a hell of a drug.

meltdown in Pennsylvania alerted the U.S. and the world to just some of the lethal consequences of nuclear energy. The melted core still sits on the banks of the Susquehanna River. Now federal and state governments

from Massachusetts to Kansas are forcing new nuclear power on the American public.”

For more information see clamshellalliance.com or [facebook.com/ClamshellAlliance](https://www.facebook.com/ClamshellAlliance).

Portsmouth Democrats Coffee Meetup
March 27 – New Location
The monthly Portsmouth Democrats Coffee Meetup will be on March 27, 2026, at a local Portsmouth restaurant, from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. “This is a great morning get together,” according to the

sponsors. “Drop in and enjoy the camaraderie of your fellow Dems, and bring a friend. There is plenty of parking. See you soon. Go Dems!” For the location of the Meetup, or any other information, contact Brian Wazlaw at (603) 988-9998 or Peter Somssich at (603) 436-5382.

BETTER OLD NEWS THAN NEW LIES

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his conduct on Market Street in the afternoon. For this he was invited to hand over \$9.60, fine and costs, and did so.

The New Hampshire Gazette
April 1, 1886

- The king of Corea has issued an edict abolishing slavery in his dominions. The population of the Corea is about 9,000,000, more than half being slaves.
- The movement in favor of the abolition of imprisonment for debt

in New York state and of arrests in civil causes has received unanimous indorsement from the chamber of commerce.

- It is announced that the late B.W. Hoyt of Epping, whose sudden death in Manchester only ten days after his wedding caused deep feeling recently, was a forger, bogus paper to the amount of \$35,000 having turned up, endorsed with B.W. Hoyt Co.’s name. It is supposed that he used the money in stock speculations. The company it is said cannot be held legally liable on the notes,

but will provide for their payment.

- There are said to be fifty widows living within the village limits of Colebrook.
- The woolen mills at Gonic now work ten hours a day—sixty hours a week, against 67 1/2 hours in the past.
- Martin Snee, of Haverhill, Mass., and Ira Maddocks of Dover, had a fight in an old barn in Plaistow on the afternoon of March 21st, in presence of about one hundred low-

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Murph’s Fortnightly Quote

“Those who corrupt the public mind are just as evil as those who steal from the public purse.”

—Adlai E. Stevenson II (1900-1965)
Illinois Governor, U.N. Ambassador

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Beware of
Cruise Ships

— a Bar Harbor reader

“The tragedy of modern man is not that he knows less and less about the meaning of his own life, but that it bothers him less and less.”

— Václav Havel

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Now What?

To the Editor:

Trump's attack on Iran comes as no surprise. It is entirely consistent with the rash, ego-driven behavior that he has shown throughout his second term. He has consistently acted as an autocrat, ignoring long-established democratic norms and laws, relying on his own erratic whims. When asked what might restrain his actions, Trump replied nothing "but my own mind." He has threatened to forcibly annex Canada, the Panama Canal and Greenland. He has used the military without due process to destroy boats allegedly carrying drugs. Recently, he has removed the President of Venezuela in a military operation and has now started a war with Iran.

Wars always entail death, injury and destruction. They should never be started on the whim of a single leader. In a democracy, wars must be justified in terms of an imminent threat to the country, and the threat must be specified and communicated to citizens. The strategic objectives of the war must be defined and the means of achieving them specified. Conditions that define the end of the war must be made explicit, and an end game strategy be formulated. It is irresponsible to engage in open-ended destruction of targets without defining what the war is intended to achieve. Additionally, no war should be undertaken without consideration of its possible consequences in human, political, and economic terms. The Trump administration has failed in all these dimensions.

It appears that Trump initiated the war on Iran on a whim without prudent consideration of the consequences of his action. His press secretary has said that Trump decided to launch the attack while his emissaries were engaged in negotiations because he had a "feeling" that Iran was going to attack first. Unfortunately, his feeling did not provide insight into potential downsides of the war. Iran controls the Strait of Hormuz through which 20 percent of the global supply of crude oil is shipped. The strait has been closed since the first day of the war with the result that crude oil and

gasoline prices have skyrocketed. The longer the strait is closed, the greater the disruption will be. Iran is proving not to be the pushover that Venezuela was and has recently attacked tankers, refineries and fuel depots around Hormuz indicating that they view the war as nowhere near being done. The implications for long-term inflation and economic disruption are dire.

Global commerce has become a vast, interconnected system, and the blowback from the closure of Hormuz will affect several products other than gasoline. For example, the Mideast's natural gas and petroleum refining byproducts are used in the production of approximately one-third of globally used fertilizers. Just as farmers are preparing fields for spring planting, fertilizer prices have skyrocketed, guaranteeing that we will see higher food prices in the fall. Expect to see sustained inflation across dozens of other products due to the closing of Hormuz.

The war is estimated to be costing the U.S. one billion dollars per day which will require a large addendum to defense spending that will be funded through Treasury debt. This comes at a time when U.S. Treasury bonds are under pressure from global investors because of our current large national debt. The likely result will be an increase in Treasury Bond interest rates to attract wary investors. Higher bond costs will increase the costs of servicing the debt and cause even more inflation as the price of mortgages and car loans will rise.

Trump's hubris has led him to underestimate Iranian resolve and believe that a war will be won easily. His air war is unlikely to result in immediate regime change without boots on the ground as demonstrated by the appointment of Mojtaba Khamenei as the new Supreme Leader. The revolution expected to depose the Ayatollahs does not appear to have the grass roots organization that could quickly topple the current regime. As long as the Revolutionary Guards control Hormuz, Trump is faced with an unpopular long-term military campaign while the world suffers an economic calamity. National emergency anyone?



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

Robert:

Fittingly, considering the year, we could swear that we could hear, while reading your first paragraph, echoes of the "facts submitted to a candid world" in the Declaration of Independence.

The Editor

Were We All Born Yesterday?

Dear Sir:

Most Americans are not familiar with the history of the United States and our involvement with horrible human rights violations that we helped create and support in Iran. While we have been well versed on the human rights abuses of the Islamic Clerics who have ruled Iran since 1979, the previous history has been erased from our memory. However, those abuses have not been erased from the memory of many Iranians.

The United States took the leading role in a 1953 covert operation, called Operation Ajax, whereby CIA-funded agents were used to foment unrest inside Iran by way of the harassment of religious and political leaders and a media disinformation campaign. In August 1953, the democratically elected Prime Minister Mosaddegh and his government were overthrown in a CIA-supported *coup d'etat*. As a result, the U.S. supported Mohammad Reza, known as the Shah of Iran, who returned to power. The Shah greatly expanded the military and turned it against his own people. It is estimated that over 50,000 Iranians who opposed the Shah were murdered by the army. (*Harvard Crimson*, December 6, 1979) The Shah ruled until the Islamic revolution in 1979, and the legacy of his abuses has fueled the hatred toward America ever since.

In the current war with Iran, it has been the hope of the Trump administration that the Iranian people would rise up against the terror inflicted on them by the Islamic clerics. Unfortunately, that has not happened for a number of reasons. First, the Iranian people do not trust America because of our previous history supporting the Shah, who was as brutal a dictator as the current leadership. Second, they

see our one-sided support for Israel to be against their national interests. And third, when American bombs and missiles kill children in schools, kill innocent civilians, and destroy many sacred religious and historical sites, it eliminates any good will Iranians had toward America, but rather creates anger and hatred against America and gives support to the current government.

While the reality of the current situation and our historical record in Iran might be inconvenient for many, it is important for us to accept this reality. Like in physics, for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.

Rich DiPentima
Portsmouth, N.H.

Rich:

At first blush it seems preposterous to imagine that most Americans are unaware that our own government set this vast tragedy in motion more than 70 years ago. Then we recall how surprised we were, on landing in Vietnam in 1967, that the U.S. government had been trying to prop up France's colonial government there just 13 years earlier.

We are currently up to our necks in what the inaptly-named "intelligence community" calls "blowback." ["The unintended consequences and unwanted side-effects of a covert operation." - Wikipedia]. It's not comfortable reading, but Chalmers Johnson's Blowback trilogy goes a long way towards explaining how we got into this mess.

The Editor

Social Circle: Small Town, Big Prison

Dear Editor:

March 14's *New York Times* has a two-page spread picturing plans for an 8,500-occupant detainment center to handle ICE captives in Social Circle, Georgia. "At over a million square feet, it would be larger than any single jail or prison building in America." A sickening possibility. Human ingenuity used for this? Business profit made like this? Details: 2/3 used for pods and 1/3 for administration. First-floor layout shows 5000 people in 80 pods. One hour daily recreation in small

space. The density of detainees will "need a huge amount of ventilation." "At least some interior walls should be solid." Department of Homeland Security's recent structures with chain-link fence walls let outbreaks of measles and COVID spread.

Social Circle construction will start "as early as mid-May," taking 60 to 75 days. Anyone in this inhumane scheme claim a conscience? Anyone in this shameful scheme show love to family and friends? Every WWII movie about Hitler's cooperative Germans comes to mind. A new Swedish documentary, "The Swedish Connection," about a diplomat who quietly saves thousands of Jewish lives from death camps, is on Netflix and reflects on our U.S.A. now. Watch it.

Lynn Rudmin Chong
Sanbornton, N.H.

Lynn:

Not to be cynical or anything, but we'd bet a significant chunk of townfolk are talking this up as a great boon for the local economy.

The Editor

Trump's Bogus Talking Points

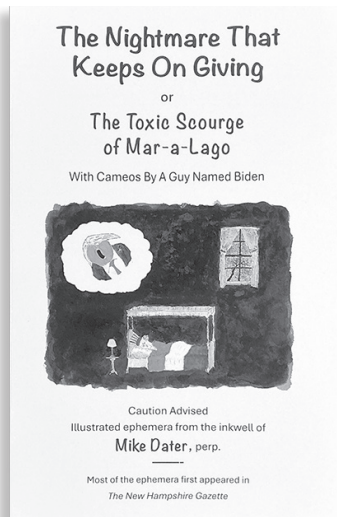
To the Editor:

We all plow through a lot of media: videos, talking heads, columns, internet, ads, talk shows... I have a great way to save you time sorting through this barrage: the use of certain phrases shows the people talking/writing/bloviating don't know what they're talking about. If they use one of these phrases, you can tune them out, with zero loss.

For example, "Biden's Open Border." If someone uses this phrase, they're just spouting propaganda. Some actual facts: from the BBC, Dec. 24, 2024, "U.S. deportations under Biden surpass Trump's record;" and from NPR on Dec. 20, 2024, "deportations hit a 10-year high in 2024." Biden did not have an "Open Border." The term "Open Border" is an open lie.

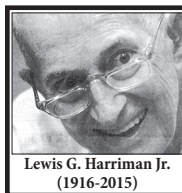
"The Liberal Media." The right wing claims that the media is controlled by liberals. The exact opposite is true: most media, of all types, radio,

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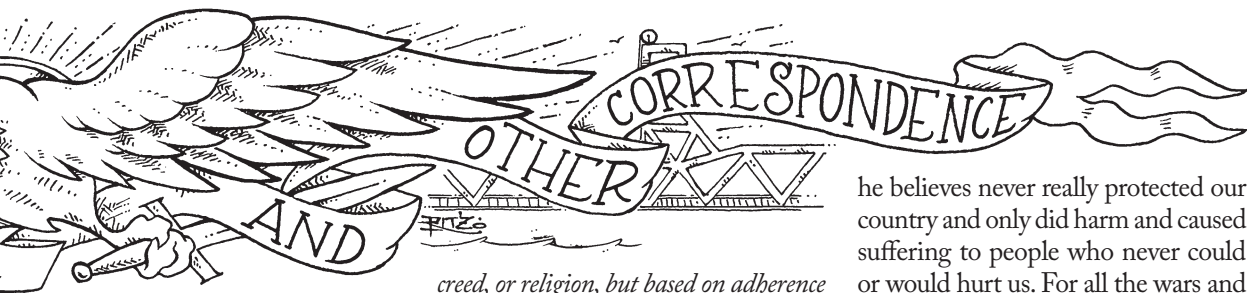
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The Editor

The Cold War Viewed as a Good War

Dear Editor:

I read W.D Ehrhart's column "Do Not Thank Me for My Service" with great interest. It made me reflect on my 28 years of military service from 1967-1995. I served during the Vietnam War, the Cold War, and the first Gulf War. Thankfully, I was never sent to a combat zone during my years of service.

I can understand and appreciate Mr. Ehrhart's reasoning for not wanting to be thanked for his service, which

he believes never really protected our country and only did harm and caused suffering to people who never could or would hurt us. For all the wars and other military interventions Mr. Ehrhart mentioned, he is absolutely correct. I also do not wish to be thanked for any part I might have played in contributing to the harm and suffering they caused. However, I have one exception for which my service might deserve some recognition and thanks for.

That exception involves the Soviet Union and the so-called "Cold War" that existed from the end of WWII to the fall of the Soviet Union in the late 1990's. I think that it could be reasonable to consider that the Soviet Union actually did pose a threat to America and the American people as well as our allies. While it is insane that both

the U.S., the Soviets, and now Russia, among others, maintain huge arsenals of nuclear weapons—that is a reality. As unfortunate as that was, that reality demanded that the U.S. maintain a military force capable of providing a deterrent against any Soviet attack on our nation or our allies. If my service or the service of any other member of the military, including Mr. Ehrhart, helped to prevent a nuclear war by contributing to that deterrent, then we do deserve some thanks for that, and only that.

Rich DiPentima
Portsmouth, N.H.

Rich:

By "Cold War" we presume you mean the "Great Patriotic Crusade to Protect Capitalism Against the Greed of Serfdom."

The Editor

Tariffs: A Lose-Lose Proposition

To the Editor:

Trump's tariffs have once again come into national focus following the

Supreme Court's ruling that the duties issued under the National Emergency Act are unconstitutional. What have we learned about the effects of the Trump tariffs during the past year?

Although the President persists that tariffs are paid by exporting countries, the evidence reveals this claim to be false. Tariffs are indeed a tax. Recent studies by Goldman Sachs and the Federal Reserve have shown that the cost of Trump's tariffs have been borne primarily by the American consumer in the form of price increases while a small percentage has been absorbed by American businesses. Estimates are that the average family will pay approximately \$1,000 extra this year because of Trump's tariffs. This burden will disproportionately affect working class families rather than the financial elites.

Trump alleges that tariffs reduce the trade deficit and bring manufacturing jobs back to America. Neither claim

to next page

Ecumenical GOP Bigotry

To the Editor:

Rep. Andy Ogles (R-Tenn.) recently posted on social media that "Muslims don't belong in American society."

Similarly, in February, Rep. Randy Fine (R-Fla.) wrote on X: "If they force us to choose, the choice between dogs and Muslims is not a difficult one."

House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-La.) has declined to condemn these comments, asserting, "I've spoken to those members and all members, as I always do, about our tone and our message and what we say."

Anti-Arab racism receives little pushback in our country. Imagine the furor if the word "Jews" was substituted for "Muslims" in these statements.

Bigotry against any faith community undermines the principles our nation claims to uphold. History shows where such dehumanization leads. Both citizens and elected leaders must insist that dignity and equality belong to all Americans, without exception.

Terry Hansen
Grafton, Wisconsin

Terry:

Not only are Ogles and Fine bigots, they don't understand America. What makes it, if not "Great" in current parlance, then at least worthy of respect, is that citizenship is no accident of birth,

Remembering Country Joe

by Ed Palm

We lost a great American on March 7th. To my generation at least, he was great. I'm referring to Joseph Allen McDonald, known to his Vietnam-Generation fans as Country Joe McDonald. He died from complications of Parkinson's disease at age 84 in his home in Berkeley, California.

Country Joe burst on the scene at Woodstock with his satiric antiwar anthem "I-Feel-Like-I'm-Fixin'-to-Die-Rag." That song poses the musical question, "What are we fightin' for?" And Joe's answer: "Don't ask me. I don't give a damn. Next stop is Vietnam." If you've never heard it, Google it. A video of Country Joe's original Woodstock performance is available on YouTube.

Some readers may be put off by the irreverent mordant irony of the song: i.e., "Be the first one on your block to have your boy come home in a box." And it is prefaced with a variation of Joe's inimitable "FISH" cheer. Those infected by the faux patriotism of the MAGA group might forgo it. Likewise those who have bought into the Reaganite revision of ours having been "a noble cause" in Vietnam. The myth persists that prior to the Tet Offen-

sive of 1968 most of the troops were onboard with the cause. I reported to Vietnam in November of 1966 and rotated home in early January 1968—prior to the Tet Offensive. Most of the Marines I knew back then were profoundly skeptical of why we were there. Count me among that lot.

I was privileged to serve in the Corps' Combined Action Program. Ours was not to search and destroy. Ours was to try to win those elusive hearts and minds out in the countryside—or as *Life* magazine characterized it in their issue of August 25, 1967, the mission was "to keep a village free." The Corps stationed squads of Marines, augmented by Navy Corpsemen, in Vietnamese villages to train and patrol alongside village self-defense units known as Popular Forces. I learned firsthand what Graham Greene had tried to tell us in *The Quiet American*, the seminal novel of the American experience in Vietnam: We were "trying to [fight] a war with the help of people who just [weren't] interested."

To say the least, I came back from Vietnam embittered and disillusioned. I was a G.I. Bill student, a freshman at the University of Delaware, when I first heard Country Joe's "I-Feel-Like-I'm-Fixin'-to-Die-Rag." It must have been September of 1969. I was at the

Deer Park Tavern in Newark, Delaware, when the song came on the jukebox. It immediately struck a resonant chord in me, and the guys I was with called it up twice more in my honor.

I never could have imagined it at the time, but years hence, my path and Country Joe's would cross. What Joe's fans back at Woodstock didn't know was that he was an honorably discharged Navy veteran. I met Joe in 1987 at the University of California, Berkeley. I was the Marine Officer Instructor with Berkeley's Naval ROTC unit. Joe was organizing a series of events aimed at reconciling those who served with those who had protested the war. It would be called "A Vietnam Film Festival and Arts Fair."

It just so happened that an arsonist had burned down Berkeley's Navy and Air Force ROTC building on February 18, 1985. (Just my luck!) And I thought opening a dialogue between ROTC and the campus at large would be a good idea. So with the reluctant permission of my boss, a Navy captain, I attended the organizational meetings for Joe's project.

During our first meeting, I men-

tioned to Joe that I had lost one of his albums in the arson fire that destroyed our building. At our next meeting, Joe presented me with a replacement album inscribed, "For Ed Palm, I hope this one doesn't get burned. Peace and Love, Country Joe McDonald." I'll always cherish that album.

In the end, all three ROTC units—Navy, Army, and Air Force—officially ignored Joe's "Vietnam Film Festival and Arts Fair." That's regrettable. It was an opportunity to show students and faculty that we were not war-loving, empty-headed martinets. If I say so myself, I could have been instrumental in that. I'd already gained a reputation as the liberal Marine.

An Afterword. Here's a variation on one of Wordsworth's sonnets: Country Joe, you should be singing at this hour! We have need of your satire.

A former enlisted Marine and a Vietnam veteran, Ed Palm retired from the Marine Corps as a major and went on to an academic career. He lives in Forest, Virginia, and can be contacted at majorpalm@gmail.com.

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from previous page

has been borne out. The American consumer's demand for imported goods has not abated. Although the trade deficit with China has decreased, the overall goods deficit hit a record high in 2025. Global corporations and Chinese manufacturers have been adept at transferring their products to supply chains outside of China, masking their origin in China, but not reducing the overall deficit. Trade deficits with Vietnam, Mexico, Taiwan and India were among the highest on record. Moreover, small businesses have borne the brunt of tariffs more so than large corporations. Multinational companies have the resources and bargaining power to reduce the damages of tariffs. They can spread their impact among large, diverse product lines and, as mentioned above, find alternate supply chains that reduce tariff impacts. Small businesses have neither financial nor informational resources to avoid tariffs and have little option but to pass on the costs to consumers.

Regarding manufacturing jobs, although there has been a slight increase in employment by U.S. steel producers, manufacturers lost approximately 108,000 jobs in 2025. Increased employment in steel production was more than matched by job losses by steel fabricators who import steel and aluminum parts and components. Tariffs on imported components have driven up fabricators' costs and prices so that job losses in the industry exceed job gains by steel producers. For example, in a recent *New York Times* article a forklift manufacturer claimed that it was cheaper to import a forklift manufactured in Asia and pay the tariff on the completed product rather than pay the tariffs on the imported components and assemble them in the U.S.

There are economic justifications for tariffs. They can be effective retaliation for unfair trade practices or to protect critical industries but, in

either case, they must be applied in a targeted, strategic manner. Trump's chaotic, capricious application of tariffs provides few economic benefits while disrupting international trade and alienating allies. There is seemingly no overall plan in his application of tariffs beyond his whims and personal aggrandizement. He wields tariffs like a Mafia Don, rewarding his allies or punishing his enemies. He has boasted that he increased Swiss tariffs because he did not like the tone of the Swiss President in a telephone conversation. Such arbitrary use of tariffs provides no economic benefit and only alienates allies and trade partners. Moreover, he has reduced or eliminated tariffs for companies owned or managed by cronies or supporters, creating the appearance of crony capitalism at the least or outright corruption at the worst. Trump has lowered the U.S. to the level of a Banana Republic in the eyes of the world. His tariff policy is as disorganized as his mind. It is time for Congress to take away the tariff tool from the spoiled child in the White House.

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

Robert:

Thank you. Such a calm and well-reasoned analysis of tariffs—an important, if recently-overlooked front in Trump's broader de facto war against America. Would that we had a fraction of your self-control.

You briefly touched on "the appearance of crony capitalism at the least or outright corruption at the worst" inherent in Trump's use of tariffs. We would like to emphasize the fact that rapid and arbitrary imposition of tariffs provides those with inside information a splendid opportunity to reap windfalls.

To be fair, we must acknowledge that there is one thing preventing the president and his inner circle from raking in illicit profits: Trump calls it "My own morality."

The Editor

Lindsey Graham's Selective Historical Memory: Setting the Record Straight on WWII

by Richard Balzano

Senator Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) has a skewed understanding of the Second World War.

In a recent *Sky News Arabia* interview, Graham claimed the existential threats faced by Israel are akin to those faced by the U.S. in WWII, insisting that Israel's military response in Gaza is no less justified than the allied choice to bomb civilian targets in Germany or the American decision to drop atomic bombs on Japan: "Just flatten it. We flattened Berlin. We flattened Tokyo. Were we wrong to drop an atomic bomb to end the Japanese reign of terror?" He has repeatedly invoked Hiroshima and Nagasaki to justify Israel's total war, and labeled October 7th Israel's "Pearl Harbor." These references rest on a distinctly American misunderstanding about how and why WWII unfolded.

Chest-thumping Americans often deflect European criticism with, "You'd be speaking German if it wasn't for us." Hollywood has canonized Normandy as the decisive turning point in the European theater, but the pivotal moment came earlier on the eastern front when the Soviet Union defeated the Germans at Stalingrad by February 1943, and began chasing the Wehrmacht westward. Germany was already bleeding out when the Americans stormed Normandy in June 1944. The Red Army bore the brunt, and when Allied forces raced towards Berlin, it was the Soviets who arrived first—hence a divided Germany.

The Soviets by far suffered the war's greatest losses—between 24 and 27 million Russians died during the war. In our hyperpatriotic Cold War commitment to anathematize Moscow, American historical memory neglects their partnership and sacrifice. Polemical works like *The Black Book of Communism* padded their "victims of communism" statistic by including Nazi soldiers and collaborators killed by the Red Army. Memory in the United States is less about history than about narrative management.

This distortion bleeds into the present. Americans justify their morbidly obese military budget by insisting that "we" protect "all of you," gesturing to our NATO

allies like Denmark whose territories we now threaten to confiscate. Western allies tethered to Washington's fading hegemony bite their tongues while the mythology that only Americans adhere to persists: America the exceptional, innocent, reluctant bodyguard, savior, liberator and harbinger of democracy.

Graham's confidence that incinerating up to 250,000 Japanese citizens was morally uncomplicated belongs to such mythology. Conventional wisdom, historical memory, and American textbooks credit Washington's decision to a desire to expedite Japan's surrender and spare American lives. An Orientalist version offers that the Japanese were so fanatically loyal that every man, woman, and child would have fought to the death had the Americans invaded the mainland. The latter is racist caricature, but the former contains a shard of truth, void of crucial context.

Wars are not (responsibly) ended in a vacuum. They are ended with an eye toward what comes next. Washington was aware that Japan was on the verge of surrender in the summer of 1945. The U.S.S.R. pivoted to the Pacific theater, and the U.S. needed to expedite the war's end to prevent the Soviets from having a seat at the table when determining the trajectory of postwar Japan. The Red Army planted its flag over Berlin first; the Americans had no intention of sharing leverage in the Pacific. Demonstrating a terrifying new weapon served two purposes—ending the war quickly and signaling to Moscow who possessed the ultimate death machine. The result was not lasting peace but an accelerating arms race that defined the second half of the twentieth century.

There were bureaucratic considerations as well. The Manhattan Project had consumed unprecedented resources, and scientific careers, institutional reputations, and military budgets were tied to its success. What precedent would be set if the most expensive weapon ever built went unused? What would it mean for future military budgets if the war could be won without such a weapon? The military might not be given a future blank check for death toys if they had nothing to show for it. The military industrial project was not yet enshrined as our national pur-

pose, and the government was not immune to sunk-cost analysis.

Graham's claim that the bombs were dropped "to end the Japanese reign of terror" rings hollow. Imperial Japan committed unspeakable horrors across Korea, China, and the Pacific. Moral outrage is rarely distributed evenly. The U.S. committed a plethora of atrocities in Asia in the succeeding decades, but hawks like Graham do not traffic in apologies. Righteousness travels selectively, often first class and paid for with AIPAC money.

By invoking "Pearl Harbor" in the context of Israel, Graham unintentionally draws attention to the colonial parallels between Hawaii and Palestine. Americans rationalize entry into WWII by claiming that Japan attacked "American territory" in 1941, but Hawaii was not yet a state. Hawaii was a plantation colony, wherein local resources and labor were exploited, Hawaiians were displaced, white settlers took possession of prime real estate and established a segregated plantation caste system sometimes referred to as "environmental apartheid." Japanese-Americans were interred in camps during WWII, but Americans unwilling to differentiate between Hawaiians and Japanese people living in Hawaii interred both, ostensibly transforming Hawaii into one large internment camp. The twentieth century militarization of Hawaii imposed economic dependency and cultural genocide on the Native population. Parallels can be found, as displaced Palestinians living under the Israeli settler colonial project endure what international and Israeli human rights organizations deem apartheid. Gazans long subject to Israeli control over movement, water, and aid, are now starving in refugee camps, and the UN has determined Israel's assault on Gaza has crossed the threshold for genocide. Graham's comparison is more illuminating than he realizes. He's right about the analogy—just not the lesson.

Richard M. Balzano is an historian and political analyst peddling truths at several institutions of higher learning, quietly devoted to the art of sedition and comfortably resigned to the peripheral left.

BETTER OLD NEWS THAN NEW LIES

from page three

lived ruffians. Snee won, knocking Maddocks out in the 21st round. The fight was for \$150 and gate money.

• John P. Neville, said to be an ex-sheriff of Nevaville, Col. [sic, probably Nevadaville, now a ghost

town], and E.L. Buchanan of Franklin, had a "glove fight to a finish" in Burleigh hall, Franklin, on the evening of March 31st, for \$250 and gate money. Neville won on a foul. If the New Hampshire laws are not strong enough to stop such disgraceful exhibitions of brutality, they should be made strong enough.

• Mr. Editor: I learn that I am accused of having been one of the abettors of the illegal acts [a prize fight] committed on Leach's island between four and five o'clock Sunday morning, March 28th. It is bad

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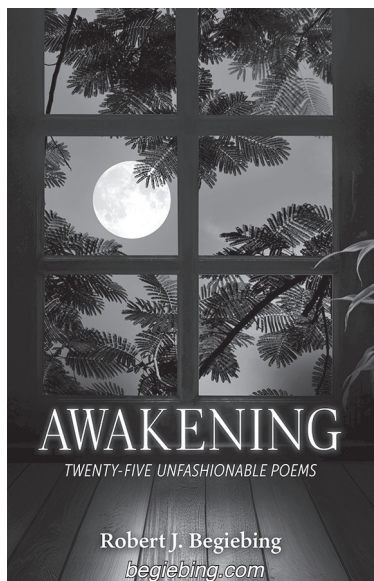
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Yet Another Undeclared War

by W.D. Ehrhart

So here we are again, engaged in another war that can only be called “legal” by the most dubious and twisted reasoning while ignoring the right to go to war vested only in Congress by the Constitution. Let’s call this one the “Who-Is-Jeffrey-Epstein-Anyway?” War. And it’s certainly working. Once again, as he has done over and over and over again in his charmed life, our Grifter-in-Chief has evaded responsibility or accountability for his immoral, amoral, criminal behavior.

Nevermind if the primary beneficiary of crippling Iran happens to be Israel, a nation that has maintained an apartheid state for over 80 years, has killed over 70,000 innocent civilians in Gaza just since October 2023, and whose “settlers” are actively engaged in the ethnic cleansing of the West Bank with the collusion of the Israeli Defense Forces and police.

Nevermind if other major beneficiaries of war against Iran happen to be the Arab Gulf States, whose governments are no less repressive than the government of Iran. States where women still live under “male guardianship” without anything like full legal or civil equality, and things like freedom of expression and of the press are unheard of, and executions—by beheading—are still conducted in public.

Indeed, states that have given multi-millions of dollars to benefit directly Trump, Trump family members, and the billionaire friends of Trump including—but certainly not limited to—investing \$500 million in a cryptocurrency operation co-founded by our 45th & 47th president, his three sons, and other investors including Steve Witkoff, who happens to be Trump’s Special Envoy to the Middle East, a deal concluded just days before the 2025 presidential inauguration, and coming on the heels of a deal to sell highly sensitive technology to the UAE previously not permitted for reasons of national security.

(But hey, what does national security matter when the Trumpsters stand to make yet more multi-mil-

ions? After all, the UAE is going to pay somebody for those AI chips, and it ain’t gonna be you or me.)

Nevermind that less than a year ago, Trump claimed to have destroyed—with the assistance of Israel—Iran’s ability to make a nuclear weapon, thus removing whatever threat Iran posed, though it actually posed no threat because it didn’t possess a nuclear weapon in the first place, and supposedly—after June 2025—could no longer build one.

And nevermind if more than 150 Iranian schoolgirls ages 7 to 12 were killed in an air strike last week. It reminds me of that famous statement attributed to a U.S. Air Force officer during the American War in Vietnam: “We had to destroy the village in order to save it.”

Vietnam, as we now know, was a war fought under false pretenses. There never was an unprovoked attack by the North Vietnamese on U.S. naval vessels minding their own business in international waters, and the U.S. government knew this at the time. In fact, those ships were operating in Vietnamese waters in support of South Vietnamese combat operations against the North. The premise justifying the Tonkin Gulf Resolution that opened the floodgates for undeclared executive wars was simply a lie. A flat-out flagrant lie. And 58,000 Americans died for it along with millions of Asians.

In 1983, we were told that the Cubans were building an airfield on Grenada to accommodate Soviet bombers, so we had to invade to stop that construction. After we took control of Grenada, we finished the airfield, which was actually being built to facilitate tourism to the island.

In 1989, we were told that Manuel Noriega was trafficking drugs to the U.S., though he’d been on the payroll of the Central Intelligence Agency for a couple of decades. You mean he was selling drugs out of the trunk of his car in his spare time, and the U.S. had no idea this was going on until the last years of George H. W. Bush’s presidency?

In 2003, we were told that Saddam Hussein was trying to build a

Schoolgirls

Shajareh Tayebah Primary School

*The students are all girls ages 7 to 12.
The first attack comes about 10:00 a.m.
The second comes shortly thereafter
as first responders, those who’ve survived,
and others nearby rush to try to help—
a deliberate tactic called “double tap”
designed to inflict maximum carnage.
One graphic photo shows a child’s
severed arm, another a bloody backpack.*

*This is what passes for foreign policy.
This is how we defend our nation.
This is what our taxes are buying.
This is what Congress refuses to stop.*

*This is what the world sees of us.
Take a good look.
This is what we are.*

W.D. Ehrhart

nuclear weapon, and had stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction, though we now know that he had neither nukes nor WMDs, and we know that the U.S. government knew this at the time.

We were told only recently that Venezuela is flooding the U.S. with a drug called Fentanyl, and therefore we have to attack small boats in international waters and hijack ships carrying Venezuelan oil, and kidnap their head-of-state to protect Americans, though there is absolutely no evidence that Venezuela has any significant involvement in the trafficking of Fentanyl.

Meanwhile, “Executive Wars” are the only kind of wars this nation has fought since Congress declared war on Bulgaria in June 1942 (bet you didn’t know about that one). The Korean War was justified as a United Nations “police action” because Harry Truman knew he would face major opposition in Congress if he tried to get a declaration of war.

And since then, the United States has engaged in armed conflict—we generally call that war—in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, Kuwait, Iraq (repeatedly), Somalia, Serbia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Libya, Nigeria, Vene-

zuela, and now Iran (again). Did I miss any?

Way back in 1973, Congress did pass something called the War Powers Act that was supposed to curb the president’s ability to engage in “Executive War,” but that’s obviously been about as effective as treating a traumatic leg amputation with a band-aid. War after war, the members of Congress either pass some resolution that says, “Do whatever the heck you want, Mr. President; we’re certainly not going to stop you,” or just sit there bleating like the woolly little sheep too many of them are.

Looking back at the track record of excuses the U.S. government has offered for undeclared war after undeclared war over the course of the past 81 years, one has to wonder what lies have been foisted upon the American people in order to justify an unprovoked war of aggression against Iran. And how many innocent Iranians like those elementary schoolgirls will have to die before this latest round of killing ends.

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

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

Despised Billionaires Seek Refuge in Billionaire Bunker

by Jim Hightower

Trust me when I say that a home on Indian Creek Island is not for you.

First of all, you’re not a billionaire. But even a billion bucks wouldn’t buy your way onto this island in Florida’s Biscayne Bay. It’s the exclusive domain of such multi-multi-billionaires as Jeff Bezos, Larry Page, Ivanka Trump... and now Mark Zuckerberg, CEO of Facebook and Instagram.

Mark, nicknamed “Zuck,” has just paid \$170 million for a piece of this very special speck of turf, including a “cottage” with 9 bedrooms, 11 baths, a gym, a massage room, and a 1,500-gallon aquarium. Also, he built-in his own personal hair salon, plus a library with—get this—a secret passageway. No clue as to whether he reads any books, or just uses the passage to escape.

Secondly, you wouldn’t really be happy on Indian Creek Island, because it’s a pretentious fake. This high-value enclave was constructed for low-value hucksters who’ve amassed outrageous fortunes by screwing over masses of workers, competitors, taxpayers, and others. Even the “island” is fake—it’s a man-made landfill built in the Bay so ten very, very rich swells can isolate themselves from us commoners. Also, it’s more of a doomsday compound than a community, with each of the über-rich hunkered down in what’s been dubbed “Billionaire Bunker.”

These demigods of gross inequality can buy any piece of paradise, but then they’re so spooked they lock themselves behind \$170-million walls, afraid of their own shadows. So, here’s my free advice to Zuck to soothe his plutocratic trepidations: Steal a little less, practice being slightly likeable, maybe downsize to only a \$70 million mansion... and live more. You’re welcome.

Populist author, public speaker, and radio commentator Jim Hightower writes “The Hightower Lowdown,” a monthly newsletter chronicling the ongoing fights by America’s ordinary people against rule by plutocratic elites. Sign up at HightowerLowdown.org.

BETTER OLD NEWS THAN NEW LIES

enough to be wrongfully charged with being present at such an affair; but to be accused of wilfully and with malice aforethought getting up at four o’clock in the morning, is unbearable. I consider that any man who will leave his couch at four o’clock in the morning for anything less than a fire on the roof or dynamite under the bed, is but a sketch and outline of a man mentally, whom it were base flattery to call a villain; and that he deserves a year in prison and \$1,000 fine anyway, whether he breaks any law or not. Mr. Editor, I was not there; I am never anywhere at that hour; and if there was anybody at all there; of which, after reading the daily papers of the past few days, I have serious doubts,) or any island, I hope they all get what they deserve. — SOMNUS • Rev. George D. Garland, formerly pastor of the Christian church at

Newcastle, has been expelled in disgrace from the Strafford Christian conference by the executive committee. It appears that this was the reverend gentleman’s third expulsion within less than ten years, the Free-will Baptist and Christian denominations in the eastern part of Maine having purified themselves by kicking the fellow out before he came to this section of the country.

• William Parlin committed suicide at New Vineyard, Me. Paris green.

The New Hampshire Gazette
April 8, 1886



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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, MARCH 22	MONDAY, MARCH 23	TUESDAY, MARCH 24	WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25	THURSDAY, MARCH 26	FRIDAY, MARCH 27	SATURDAY, MARCH 28
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2018—At a UN confab at the Yak and Yeti Hotel in Nepal, the keynote speech is given by robot named Sophia.
2006—MV *Queen of the North*, a Canadian ferry four miles off course, hits an island at 17 knots and sinks with a loss of two lives. Union reps deny crewmembers were having sex at the time.
2003—The chief officer of RMS *Milbeim*, getting out of his chair while on watch, catches his trousers on a lever, falls and hits his head, losing consciousness. The ship runs aground at Land's End in Cornwall, a total loss.
1987—The *Mobro 4000*, a barge toting 3,168 tons of garbage, leaves NYC. After a 162 day, 6,000 mile joyride, it will return to NYC where its contents will be burned.
1986—The U.S. executes its first 'Nam vet, in Fla.'s electric chair. David Funchess, a Black former Marine, has a Purple Heart and PTSD.
1975—A worker using a candle to find air leaks starts a fire at the Brown's Ferry nuclear power plant in Alabama. Damages: about \$100 million.
1933—At Dachau, Germany opens its first concentration camp.
1820—Two U.S. Navy Commodores meet at the Bladensburg Dueling Grounds. James Barron, disgraced in the *Chesapeake-Leopard* Affair, mortally wounds Stephen "Our Country, Right or Wrong" Decatur.
1765—Great Britain attempts to impose a Stamp Act on the colonies. It does not go well.

2025—Israeli Defence Forces fire on five Palestinian ambulances in Rafah; the vehicles are crushed and buried, 15 medics are tortured and executed.
2016—Tay, a Microsoft™ AI chatbot, is released on Twitter. She's pulled 16 hours later for being a Nazi.
2004—In a Senate office building, 19 Members of Congress watch a golden crown being placed on the head of convicted tax cheat and *Washington Times* owner Rev. Sun Myung Moon.
2003—A lost U.S. Army convoy is ambushed near Nasiriyah, Iraq: 11 KIAs, five WIAs, & six POWs, including Pvt. Jessica Ryan. An Air Force A-10 kills six to 10 U.S. Marines. A U.S. Patriot missile downs an RAF fighter jet over Iraq.
1983—Acting Pres. R. Reagan touts space-based anti-missile missiles, as seen in 1940's *Murder in the Air*, in which he played Lt. "Brass" Bancroft.
1933—Support from the [Catholic] Centre Party trumps leftist opposition: the Reichstag passes the Enabling Act; Hitler becomes a dictator.
1919—In Milan, ex-newspaper editor Benito Mussolini and 100 others form *Fasci di Combattimento*.
1901—U.S. troops capture Filipino rebel leader Emilio Aguinaldo, whom the U.S. had earlier backed in his fight against Spanish colonial powers.
1877—Mormon leader John D. Lee is executed by a firing squad for his role in the Mountain Meadows Massacre. He leaves 19 wives and 56 children.

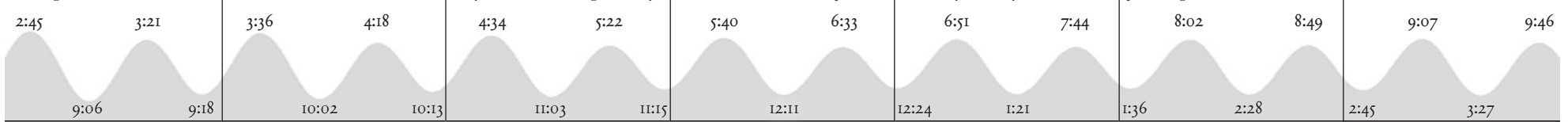
2004—A-list broadcast journalists at a black-tie dinner crack up as President George W.[MD] Bush jokes about "his" failed search for WMDs. Less amused: families of the 691 GI's killed to date in the war he began.
1989—Exxon's environment policy is made clear by oil gushing through the hull of the *Exxon Valdez*.
1985—Shot by a Soviet sentry while peeping at an East German tank shed, U.S. Army Maj. Arthur D. Nicholson becomes what the Pentagon calls "the last casualty of the Cold War."
1972—A gang of burglars breaks through the roof of the United California Bank's vault in Laguna Niguel, Calif., in an effort to rip off Richard Nixon's \$30 million slush fund.
1972—At Washington, D.C.'s Mayflower Hotel, E. Howard Hunt and G. Gordon Liddy try to score an "LSD-type drug" from an ex-CIA doctor. They even fail at that.
1971—The *Washington Post* reports that stolen FBI documents show mailmen, a Swarthmore switchboard operator, and a local police chief have been spying on Philadelphia activists.
1971—Operation Lam Son 719, the ARVN invasion of Laos, ends. Casualty count: enormous; winners: none.
1966—The Supreme Court rules that poll taxes—a key element of Jim Crow oppression—are unconstitutional.
1944—At Stalag Luft III, 76 POWs exit via "Tunnel Harry"; three get away, 50 are shot. Not so great, really.

2003—Four Air Force generals get sacked after a massive rape scandal.
1997—Florida's "Old Sparky" sets Pedro Medina on fire as it kills him.
1976—Execs at the Ford plant in Argentina begin doing the new military junta's bidding. Work incentives include torture, kidnapping, & murder.
1971—For a \$427,000 "contribution" towards Dick "Original Dick" Nixon's re-election, three dairy co-ops get \$600 million in milk price supports.
1966—"Of all the forms of inequality," says MLK Jr., "injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane."
1966—Fifteen WW II and Korean War veterans burn discharge papers in NYC to protest the Vietnam War.
1965—In Montgomery, Ala., 25,000 civil rights marchers arrive at the state capitol, thanks to the National Guard.
1960—The head of Oliver Cromwell, struck off in an "execution" two years after his death and piked for decades, is buried at his Cambridge alma mater.
1955—U.S. Customs seizes Allen Ginsburg's "Howl" as "obscene."
1947—A Centralia, Ill. coal mine, long the subject of ignored complaints and warnings, explodes, killing 111.
1931—In Alabama, the Scottsboro Boys are arrested on bogus charges.
1931—RIP, Ida B. Wells: fierce foe of lynching, born of enslaved ancestors.
1911—The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire kills 146 sweatshop workers in New York City. The factory's fire doors had been locked shut to enhance profits.

2021—Under a painting of a plantation, flanked by white men, Gov. Brian Kemp signs a law restricting voting. Rep. Park Cannon, who's Black, is arrested and dragged from his office.
2006—Justice Antonin Scalia is photographed on the steps of a Boston church, making an obscene gesture.
1983—Bob "Bob Dole" Dole calls Ford, Carter, and Nixon "Hear no evil, see no evil, and evil."
1982—Ground is broken in D.C. for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.
1972—Gen. John D. Lavelle loses two stars and command of the 7th Air Force for obeying Nixon's secret orders and bombing North Vietnam.
1968—A dozen "Wise Men" finally tell LBJ it's time to get out of Vietnam.
1964—Malcolm X and MLK shake hands in Washington, D.C.: their first meeting, and their only meeting.
1920—After the rope breaks, James Johnson tells his executioners in Poplar Bluff, Mo., "Hurry up, boys, and get me out of my misery." They do.
1812—The gerymander is born, in a 1947 *A Centralia, Ill. coal mine*, long the subject of ignored complaints and warnings, explodes, killing 111.
1931—In Alabama, the Scottsboro Boys are arrested on bogus charges.
1931—RIP, Ida B. Wells: fierce foe of lynching, born of enslaved ancestors.
1911—The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire kills 146 sweatshop workers in New York City. The factory's fire doors had been locked shut to enhance profits.

2014—Receipts in hand, the UN accuses the U.S. of civil rights violations.
2003—Iraq "can really finance its own reconstruction and relatively soon," U.S. Undersecretary for Defense Paul Wolfowitz tells Congress. "There's a lot of money to pay for this that doesn't have to be U.S. taxpayer money."
1990—SCOTUS says it's OK to limit corporate campaign spending—a flicker of sanity snuffed out in 2010.
1986—Congress slashes welfare while approving \$100 million for a drug gang called "The Contras."
1980—A bad weld drops the oil platform *Alexander L. Kielland* into the North Sea: of 212 aboard, 123 perish.
1964—History's 2nd largest earthquake hits Anchorage; 115 die.
1956—Alleged Christian Billy Graham advises Ike to ignore civil rights.
1943—So that forged IDs may avoid Nazi detection, openly gay Dutch artist Willem Arondeus and others bomb the Amsterdam Public Records Office. Their plot is a success.
1942—ADM John W. Wilcox, Jr., commanding a task force bound for Scapa Flow, is washed off his flagship and lost one day out of Casco Bay.
1814—A severed-nose count shows that General Andy Jackson's troops, with a 3-1 advantage, massacred 85 percent of their Creek opponents at Horseshoe Bend on the Tallapoosa.
1800—Federalist Senators find *Aurora* editor W. Duane in contempt for publishing the truth about them.

2007—Phyllis Schlafly explains to Bates students that a married woman "has consented to sex, and I don't think you can call it rape."
2003—"The enemy we're fighting [in Iraq]," General William S. Wallace admits, "is different from the one we'd war-gamed against."
1979—After a stuck valve dumps too much coolant, an emergency cooling system kicks in, but it's overridden by operators who fail to see a hidden indicator light. The nuclear reactor core at Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania partially melts, releasing 43K curies.
1967—The RAF drops bombs on *Torrey Canyon* to mitigate an oil spill in the English Channel; most miss.
1920—Thirty-eight tornadoes in eight states kill 380 on Palm Sunday.
1904—Western Miners Federation president Charlie Moyer is arrested in Colorado for flag desecration. He's so ticked off he helps found the IWW.
1884—A mob in Cincinnati tries to lynch a white murderer. Thwarted, the mob grows to 10,000. Gun battles rage. Order is restored by the State Militia: 56 dead and 300 wounded.
1864—Boozed-up Copperheads and Union soldiers hold a battle royale in Charleston, Ill.; 9 die, mostly soldiers.
1757—"The day will be hard," says Robert-François Damiens as he's hauled from his cell. For trying to kill Louis XV, his arms and legs are pulled off by horses. His still-living torso is then burned at the stake.



SUNDAY, MARCH 29	MONDAY, MARCH 30	TUESDAY, MARCH 31	WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1	THURSDAY, APRIL 2	FRIDAY, APRIL 3	SATURDAY, APRIL 4
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2003—*Newsweek* publishes a poll saying 74 percent of Americans believe that the Bush administration has "a well thought-out military plan."
1995—Rep. Dan Burton [R-Ind.] says the U.S. "should place an aircraft carrier off the coast of [land-locked] Bolivia and crop dust the coca fields."
1973—Army Master Sergeant Max Beilke becomes the last U.S. combat soldier to leave Vietnam. He will die at the Pentagon, a civilian, on 9/11/01.
1972—In anticipation of a \$100,000 "contribution" to the Nixon re-election campaign, the EPA eases up on enforcement at a lead smelter in Idaho.
1971—Lt. William Calley gets "life in prison" for 22 My Lai murders, i.e., three years home confinement.
1960—For reasons which are unfathomable, France launches a nuclear sub.
1956—Mississippi creates a State Sovereignty Commission. Its \$250K/yr. budget buys PR, then surreptitious surveillance of civil rights groups.
1929—Abdulaziz ibn Abdul Rahman Al Saud's army defeats Ikhwan rebels at Sabilla, removing any lingering doubts about the efficacy of machine guns against camel-mounted cavalry.
1849—In Richmond, Va., friends nail Henry Brown, an enslaved Black man, into a box. Shipped as freight to Philadelphia, he's free 27 hours later.
1843—Sec. of War J.C. Spencer lunges at Sec. of the Navy Abel Upshur, who breaks a chair on Spencer's head. President Tyler breaks up the fight.

2023—An ex-U.S. President is indicted for paying hush money to a porn star without declaring it as a campaign expense, which it clearly is.
2016—School bus mechanics in Virginia discover plastic explosives inadvertently left behind by the CIA.
2003—Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld announces "we know where" Iraq's WMDs are: "the area around Tikrit and Baghdad and east, west, south, and north somewhat."
2000—Fred Trump III, whose son is chronically ill and needs special care, learns his family's health care is being terminated by his uncle Donald.
1981—John Hinckley Jr. empties a six-shooter at Pres. Ronald Reagan. A ricochet off the armored limo hits Ronnie. Al Haig announces he's "in control here." In Denver, John's older brother cancels dinner with V.P. George H.[H.]W. Bush's son Neil.
1972—Hanoi's Easter Offensive sends 200,000 PAVN soldiers across the DMZ; the mightiest attack since China crossed the Yalu.
1964—Senators (18 Democrats and one Republican) begin a 74-day filibuster of the Civil Rights Act.
1908—Green Cottenham, a Black man, is jailed for vagrancy in Alabama. The next day Pratt Coal leases him from the county for \$12/month. Five months later he's dead.
1870—The 15th Amendment passes, giving the right to vote to all, regardless of race. All males, that is.

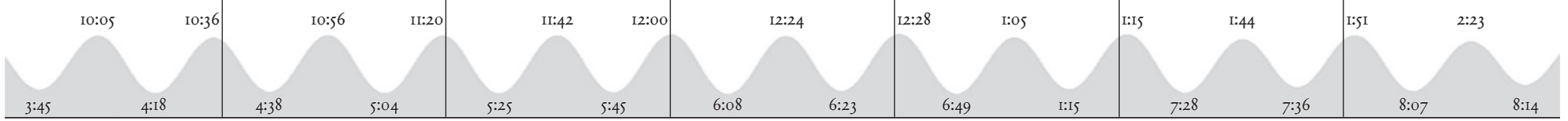
2016—Darcie Rae Hall, 36, of Troy, N.H., is arrested in Keene for selling "Donald Trump" brand heroin.
2009—Laid off Caterpillar workers in Grenoble, France take four bosses hostage. They get better severance.
2004—Four American contractors are ambushed and killed in Fallujah, their bodies displayed from a bridge.
1980—The American banking industry is deregulated with bipartisan support. What could possibly go wrong?
1969—By his orders, the body of Pres. Dwight D. Eisenhower is carried by baggage car, like any other G.I., to its final resting place in Abilene, Kan.
1968—LBJ says he won't run for re-election. Millions rejoice, having no inkling of who will replace him.
1966—In New York City, 200,000 gather to protest the Vietnam War.
1960—A B-47 explodes over Little Rock, Ark. Three on board die, and two on the ground; two homes and an apartment building burn.
1959—John Birch Society head Robert Welch, author of a book calling Pres. Eisenhower "a dedicated, conscious agent of the Communist conspiracy," denies he ever called Ike a "Card-Carrying Communist."
1950—The U.S. Gov't. burns copies of the *Scientific American* because they carry an article about the A-bomb.
1929—PR pioneer Edward Bernays, working for the American Tobacco Co., pays women to publicly smoke Luckies in New York's Easter Parade.

2013—In Portsmouth Harbor, the tanker *Harbour Feature* allides with the Sarah Mildred Long Bridge.
2004—Britain declassifies "Blue Peacock," a 1957 plan to bury nukes in Germany with live chickens keeping the electronics warm. [No, this isn't a joke.]
2003—Bush administration propagandists claim Special Forces have "rescued" PFC Jessica Lynch. It's a lie.
1994—Steve Bannon, accompanied by federal marshals, arrives via limo to manage Biosphere 2, an ecological experiment in the Arizona desert. A break-in, lawsuits, and failure ensue.
1982—Top suits at Exxon get a memo saying that use of their oil was jacking up CO2 in the atmosphere, which might irreversibly damage the climate.
1974—Sitka, Alaska residents fear dormant Mount Edgecumbe is erupting. Nope. It's just "Porky" Bickar burning tires up there in the crater.
1971—Texas legislators honor Albert de Salvo for "unconventional techniques involving population control."
1966—RIP Brian O'Nolan, aka Flann O'Brien, aka Myles na gCopaleen.
1957—The BBC reports that Swiss farmers are struggling to cope with "an exceptionally heavy spaghetti crop."
1920—Five New York legislators are expelled for being socialists.
1865—Gov. John Milton [D-Fla.], a descendant of the poet, shoots himself in the head because, "Death would be preferable to reunion."
1649—The Diggers begin digging.

2025—Liberation Day! Americans get a bunch of new tariffs taxes!
2014—In *McCutcheon*, SCOTUS makes sure rich folks have more electoral influence than mere proles.
1982—Hours after the Falklands invasion, UN Amb. Jeanne Kirkpatrick dines at the Argentine embassy.
1974—Governor Ronald Reagan's former speechwriter Robert Opel streaks the 46th Oscars ceremony.
1969—President Dwight D. Eisenhower is buried in an \$80 G.I. coffin.
1963—Martin Luther King, Jr. leads a voter registration drive in Birmingham, Ala. Police Chief "Bull" Connor responds with dogs and fire hoses.
1958—San Francisco columnist Herb Caen introduces his readers and the world to the term "beatnik."
1942—Three soldiers, two black and one white, are shot to death, and five are wounded, near Ft. Dix, N.J., in a fight over use of a payphone.
1917—In the corridor outside his Senate office, Henry Cabot Lodge (R-Mass.), 66, starts a brawl with Alexander Bannwart, a 36-year old pacifist and Lodge's constituent.
1865—In Richmond, Confederate troops burn the city to the ground as President Jefferson Davis flees.
1863—In Richmond, women rioting in the streets for bread are dispersed at bayonet point by troops under the direction of President Jefferson Davis.
1863—The *Alligator*, the Navy's 1st submarine, sinks off Cape Hatteras.

2014—Sen. Jerry Moran [R-Kan.], whose top contributor is Koch Industries, reads into the *Congressional Record* a *Wall Street Journal* op-ed in which Charles Koch defends his right to spend millions buying elections.
2004—Asked to name his biggest mistake, George W.[MD] Bush is unable to supply an answer.
1996—Ted "Unabomber" Kaczynski is arrested in his Montana cabin.
1974—Hit by 148 tornadoes, 13 states lose 315 people; 5,484 are injured.
1973—The first mobile phone call is made, on a 2.4lb. device, by a Motorola employee to a rival at AT&T.
1968—"I may not get there with you," Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. says, to Memphis sanitation workers, and eternity, "But I want you to know to-night, that we, as a people, will get to the promised land!"
1967—Ron Jones' 10th graders in Palo Alto are introduced to new rules imposing strict classroom discipline.
1966—In South Vietnam, 3,000 troops protest against the Ky gov't.
1964—In a Cleveland speech, Malcolm X says, "1964 threatens to be the most explosive year America has ever witnessed." He's right, of course.
1954—In Wisconsin, a strike begins at the Kohler bathroom fixture factory. Six years later the workers win.
1948—Jeju Islanders protest the U.S.-backed South Korean police state. This problem is solved in one year by killing ten percent of the population.

1989—In her Porsche, reaching for her cellphone while speeding to the bank she owns, Wal-Mart heiress Alice Walton hits and kills Oleta Hardin, a 50 year-old Arkansas cannery worker. Walton is not charged.
1984—Congress nixes Contra funding. President Reagan sells arms to the Ayatollah to make up the difference.
1975—Operation Babylift begins with a C-5A flight out of Tan Son Nhut. It crashes into a nearby rice paddy killing 154, including 78 kids.
1970—On the National Mall, 50,000 followers of a radio televangelist hold a "March for Victory," protesting the Vietnamization of the Vietnam War.
1968—Martin Luther King, Jr. is murdered in Memphis, perhaps by James Earl Ray; if so, with help from others who are still unknown.
1967—In Palo Alto, Robert Jones' students adopt a cross-chest salute and form a movement, "The Third Wave."
1967—Martin Luther King, Jr. denounces the Vietnam War and calls for common cause between civil rights and antiwar movements. He is then denounced by 168 major newspapers.
1953—Busy CIA head Allen Dulles OKs plans to (a) knock over Iran's elected government, and (b) study controlling people's minds with drugs.
1949—NATO forms to counter the U.S.S.R. The U.S.S.R. disbanded in 1991, but NATO is still here.
1877—A home in Somerville, Mass. gets the world's first home telephone.



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