A Marriage Made in Hell

When last we looked in on the Party of Lincoln, Mitt Romney, fresh from a narrow victory in Iowa, had just won big in New Hampshire, trouncing Rick Santorum, the second-place finisher in Iowa, and the suddenly insurgent Newt Gingrich.

At the time, members of the Republican Establishment were not without breathing sighs of relief as professional speculators on the televised news-product shows pondered whether the primary importance was really the result.

What a difference a fortnight makes — in more ways than one.

Who’s Got the Ballots?

On the morning of the 3rd, unofficial results in Iowa had Romney the winner by eight votes. Two days later Edward True, who had counted votes for one Appanoose County precinct, signed an affidavit claiming a 26-vote discrepancy, including 20 extra votes for Romney. The state GOP told True to sit down and shut up and denied any irregularities in the count, but by then the chaos was hanging out of the ballot box.

The official certification of the Iowa results, scheduled for January 19th, became a small-scale flashback to Florida in 2000. Irregularities were eventually revealed in 131 precincts — more than 7 percent of the total — and the eight ballots for precincts were apparently missing.

State Republican officials attempted a Whatever-Gambit — too many votes had been lost or misallocated to determine what had really happened, so they were declaring the contest a “split decision.” Soon, though, it was apparent that such a solution was too amateurish for even the Republican Party. In the end, Santorum was declared the official winner by 14 votes.

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Mr. Not-So-Inevitable?

The result of the Iowa mess was a setback enough for Romney, but the timing made it worse. On the same day this loss was announced, he was humiliated in South Carolina by a second-place finish to Newt Gingrich. After seeming to have swept the first two primaries earlier in the month, Romney had suddenly lost two out of three.

One problem Romney faced in South Carolina was being the sole target of a pro-Gingrich Super PAC. Winning Our Future began the month with $5 million to spend, a sum previously extracted from the pockets of members in Las Vegas and Macau by Gingrich supporter and casino owner Sheldon Adelson, the world’s 16th wealthiest person.

Much of that money was spent treating South Carolinians to a relentless barrage of “When Romney Wins, You’ll Turn to Towns,” a 28-minute no-roi video epic. Replete with references to “foreign seed money” and images of suitcases full of cash, it depicts Romney at Bain Capital as the French-speaking “privileged son of a wealthy politician” who raked in millions by throwing people out of their jobs and homes. Karl Marx, if he were a living film reviewer, would give it five stars.

In addition to the genghisque spewings of the Gingrich team, Mitt Romney faced another daunting problem: himself. The dog can be banished to the roof but you can’t do anything about the person.

His conservatism has always come off as defensive sort of way — from John McCain’s 2008 debate until approximately two weeks ago. Yet it took all that time for the Party’s Establishment elite to finally accept him. Why would they not? He is the embodiment of the Party’s economic program, collecting more money in a day than most people earn in a year.

His conservatism has always been suspect. That’s what happens when you promise gay activists you’ll treat them better than Ted Kennedy would.

Another likely reservation, which GOP pollster Frank Luntz has probably calculated out to three decimal places but would never discuss on Fox News, is the propagation of evangeliculists who will never, ever, vote for a Mormon.

The Party elites finally managed to reconcile themselves to their photogenic candidate. Which makes it all the more entertaining to watch their button-down automatons, innately unable to tell the difference between a corporate and a human being, get savagely wounded by the champions of the Party’s own morality-obessed populist base — a post-posterous knight of Falstaffian proportions, fitted out in filthy rags.

America should offer some day build a Hypocrizes Hall of Fame, with a grand courtyard in the middle featuring a towering statue of Newt Gingrich — surrounded by his righteous and adoring followers.

The Establishment, of course, would never concern itself with this moral short-comings. And why should they? When you’re in the habit of gignshing up the lads on false pretenses, buying and selling politicians by the carload, and poisoning the planet for profit, petty crimes like draft-dodging, tomb-catting, and influence-peddling don’t even register.

The most satisfying aspect to this battle royal is that it comes courtesy of the Supreme Court. Without its Citizens United decision opening the floodgates to all that Chinese gambling money, none of this would ever have happened.

Deus ex Machina Time?

Gingrich now has the benefit of another $5 million in gambling proceeds and his poll numbers show him ahead of Romney going into next Tuesday’s important Florida primary.

On the other hand, his unfa- vorable ratings among voters nationwide put him about on a par with communicable diseases.

Along with fighting Gingrich, Romney has his own income tax returns to worry about. Where Gorether, it’s a tough spot for a Party to be in — and it could not happen to a nicer amalgam of people with diatypically opposed interests.

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The New Hampshire Gazette

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News Briefs

How to (Not) Fix the Budget

About every six years, when it has nothing better to do, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) calculates the size of the tax gap — the difference between what it is supposed to receive, and what it actually collected.

The latest figures available are for 2006. The gross tax gap, the amount not paid on time, is estimated at $385 billion.

That’s $385 billion. Budget and Policy Priorities took a look at the new estimate and was disappointed. It noted that in “the areas of the tax code with substantial information reporting and withholding requirements — most notably workers’ wages, which employers report to the IRS and on which they withhold income and payroll taxes — compliance is extremely high.” But where there is third-party information reporting or withholding, tax collections are abysmal. Sole proprietors, a major class of small businesses, report less than half of their income, often by mail.

Reducing the tax gap could go a long way towards balancing the budget. In its infinite vision ad, President Obama’s “Green Room,” though, the 212th Congress has repealed laws — signed into law by George W. Bush — requiring government contractors to withheld taxes.

And, just to make matters worse, Congressional Republicans also blocked an increase in the IRS’s compliance budget that could share $30 billion off the deficit over the next decade.

Victory — For Now

Anyone who has used the internet for more than five minutes during the past fortnight has seen the fur flying over SOPA and PIPA — two bills intended, according to their sponsors, to stop online piracy and protect personal privacy.

SOPA, supported by Rep. Lamar Smith (R-TX), would allow law enforcement to block access to websites found to be violating copyright law. PIPA is a related bill sponsored by Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-VT), with a similar intent.

If passed, they’d be reconciled into law.

Due to the nature of the internet, any and all arguments either for or against these bills begins with a headline dive into the denizens of thievers. We’re not going there. Here’s the short version: the laws would a) break the internet, and b) not solve the alleged problem. In other words, the whole exercise is business as usual for Congress.

We also note with some amuse- ment that FoxNews has discovered a copyrighted photograph being used without permission on the website of SOPA sponsor Lamar Smith.

Hollywood studios are among the biggest backers of SOPA and PIPA. For years they have been throwing around spectacular claims about 750,000 lost jobs and $200 to $250 billion in lost revenue. Julian Sanchez investigated those claims three years ago for TechCrunch and concluded that “we have no good reason to think that [either set of] numbers is remotely reliable.”

Taking Hollywood’s word on matters of accounting is impru- dence at best. David Prowse, the man under the Darth Vader costume in Return of the Jedi, wrote in 2009 that he had yet to receive any residuals for his work because, though the film had grossed more...
They put in a total of $3.1 million into what they now call a Ponzi scheme. One co-founder, sued by the Securities and Exchange Commission, has already paid a $1.5 million fine. Laffer and his former colleagues are fighting the charges.

Slip-Sliding Away

Reporters Without Borders has just published its annual Press Freedom Index. Due in large part to the arrests of journalists covering Occupy protests, the U.S. ranks 47th, behind such beacons of democracy as Taiwan, South Korea — (603) 770-4633

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by passing photo ID and reidency laws to ensure that this doesn’t happen again.”

TalkingPointsMemo.com spoke to a faculty member at Rutgers Law School, Frank Askin, who had a somewhat different take.

“I think it’s nonsense, nobody voted, and if they voted, they’re facing a five year jail sentence, and I think very few people would be willing to risk that,” he said.

ThinkProgress.org has reported that Nashua City Clerk Paul Bergeron said the stunt “appears to be a violation of the state’s wiretapping code for one thing, which is a Class B felony in New Hampshire, in addition to a possible violation election fraud.”

What does it take to violate probation these days?

Could be Worse

Depressed by what passes for leadership in Concord these days? Cheer up, Bunky — it could be worse. In Missouri, a Republican candidate for Governor, Dave Spence, was recently outed for falsely claiming he had a degree in economics. Turns out it was home economics.

First District Primary

The Farmington Democratic Committee informs us they will hold a forum featuring the three candidates for the Democratic Nomination for the First District Congressional seat at the Old Town Hall in Farmington on February 15th, starting at 7:00 p.m. Participating will be Carol Shea-Porter, former First District Congresswoman of Rochester, and Andrew Hosmer, former State Senate Candidate of Laconia. The candidates will discuss the issues in the coming campaign and their reasons for running for Congress and answer questions from the public. Each candidate will make a brief opening statement, then the meeting will move to a faculty member at Rutgers

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Places to See and Hear Live Jazz.

The magazine describes the piece as “a comprehensive look at where great jazz and improvised music are being played globally — from terrific, intimate rooms to the most sophisticated concert halls.”

The February issue of Down Beat magazine, in print since 1934, includes an article headlined “212 Great Jazz Rooms: An International Listing of the Best Places to See and Hear Live Jazz.”

The cake is not a comprehensive look at where great jazz and improvised music are being played globally — from terrific, intimate rooms to the most sophisticated concert halls.”

One of those 212 best places in the world is right here in River City — the Press Room, on Daniel Street. Down Beat does not mention him by name, but there can be no doubt that Bruce Pin- gree, who books the music, deserves the credit for this honor.
Guinta's Hypocrisy

To the Editor: Earlier this month, Congress- 
man Frank Guinta met with Dover city of- 
ficials about several local devel- 
opment projects. They asked Mr. 
Guinta to assist in tracking down 
federal funds to help bring the 
concepts to fruition.

Congressman Guinta appeared 
delighted to be asked for federal 
money, saying, that there are a 
lot of things members of Congress 
can do ... to help local economies 
achieve their objectives. He agreed 
to reach out to the Economic De- 
velopment Administration and 
inform them that Dover’s infill 
projects as well as fitting out our 
both mill buildings is something he 
is interested in and wants to see 
work. And he’d like to make some 
calls to find out if the Cocheco 
waterfront development project 
could qualify for financial assis- 
tance.

Wait a minute. Is this the same 
Frank Guinta who absolutely 
rejected federal funds for local 
projects during his campaign? 
Who said in 2010, if a project is not 
the federal responsibility, other 
funds than federal funds are go- 
ing to have to be found “since we 
aren’t a federal responsibility, other 
project.”

Mr. Guinta, who has studied 
Medicare recognize that some change 
is needed; change like eliminating 
waive and making prescription 
drugs more affordable — but not 
privatization. What our President 
actually said was: “I'm not going 
to allow that [i.e. reform] to be an 
exchange for Medicare into a 
voucher program that leaves se- 
niors at the mercy of the insurance 
industry.” The President added 
the word “abandon” the fundamental 
commitment that this country has 
kept for generations” (speech, 9/19/11). 

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J. S. Gardner
Dover, NH

HB 1297 Misguided

To the Editor: Throughout decades of debate 
how to improve the American 
health care system, one proposal 
has enjoyed consistent support 
among lawmakers and the public 
— setting up a reliable mechanism 

allow uninsured individuals and small 
businesses to join together 
to purchase health insurance. Un- 
der such an arrangement (known 
as a health insurance exchange), 
premium costs would be lower and 
coverage more generous. But currently lawmakers in 
Concord are considering a bill 
that would prohibit the 
State of New Hampshire (and all 
it’s agencies) from "participating 
and otherwise enabling a func- 
tioning exchange for health insur- 
ance, whether created by the state 
or the federal government.” This 
was discussed on January 19th at 
a House Commerce Committee 
hearing.

I testified at the hearing because 
my own experience underscores 
the value of a health insurance 
exchange.

As a federal employee, I 
guaranteed coverage for anything 
I have a serious chronic condition 
(special needs). This benefit 
gave me great peace of mind. I en-
joyed choosing from a vast array of 
health insurance plans. I knew I 
could not be denied coverage due 
my pre-existing condition. In ad-
dition, all these plans were fully 
vetted. I knew they were solvent. I 
knew participating doctors were 
fully qualified. I knew my doctors 
were vetted. I knew the plans were 
supposed to return data so they could be monitored 
for the quality of care provided. 
Now that the Affordable Care 
Act (ACA) is the law of the land, 
New Hampshire has the opportu-
nity to create a state-based health 
insurance exchange which would 
help many individuals and small 
businesses.

But the Republican majority in 
the New Hampshire legislature is 
ignoring the undeniable, namely, that 
he voted to privatize Medicare and 
yes — to turn it into a voucher 
system. He voted for privatiza-

Going to vote again for polluters and 
the top 1 percent. WARN your parents 
that it sounds like he plans to go 
back to the old-style greedy and Medi-
care again. Warn small businesses 
that he is going to again favor 
corporations over them, since that 
is where he gets his money. WARN

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And Other Correspondence

your kids that he probably will vote again to reduce federal aid and their college Pell grant money, and warn your schools and towns that he will vote against them and the citizens they serve again this year.

Thanks for the warning, Rep Guinta. And here is my warning to you — you are going to be fired this November. Our district is going to vote for Carol Shea-Porter.

To the Editor:

I am writing to express my concern about the recent legislation introduced by Rep. Frank Guinta. I strongly oppose HB 542, which would allow public officials to carry concealed guns, and HB 334, which would allow college campuses to issue permits for concealed carry.

The combination of guns on public school campuses is a dangerous precedent that could lead to very unfortunate incidents. As parents, we deserve assurance that our children's safety is being prioritized.


Friday, January 27, 2012 - The New Hampshire Gazette - Page 5
The Poor Rich

by William Marvel

U

p here in Conway, our lo-

cal newspaper hears often

from the Sage of Hale’s Location, who occasionally offers cherry-
picked statistics to demonstrate how beneficent and benevolent America’s rich are to its poor. How appropriate for such lectures to emanate from the most para-
sitic community in northern New Hampshire.

Hale’s Location is an unincorpor-

ated township of palatial resi-

dences bordering Conway. I don’t think I’ve been there more than a
dozens times — mostly while try-

ing to catch the town clerk dur-

ing her office hour to determine

just how much residents there pay in real estate taxes (which ain’t much). At least twice I went there for one of Jeb Bradley’s
town meetings, among the well-

heeled homeowers who were his primary constituency. You re-

tember Jeb Bradley? He was an-

other of those congressmen who
generated his income for the necessities of life, and can

just be gluttonous for power, or

be so self-serving as to privatize Med-

icare, spend a few cents of his income for the services of a

wealthy law firm to do his bidding, and then try to sell

his brethren another $7 trillion in debt

The Sage of Hale’s Location

Frank’s Reflections

To the Editor:

Monday, January 23, 2012

“Reflections...” by Representative Frank Guinta.

I expected to read about what has been done for his constituents. After all, we pay his salary! In-

stead let’s just see the emphasis of his prose.

I look.... I can.... I’m doing.... I’m working.... I’m vis-

ing to support revenue increases.

Rich folks prefer a regressive sales tax. The bottom 50 percent usually have to spend everything they earn just to survive, so a 5-

percent sales tax would claim five percent of their entire income. The millionaire need only pay a

over 2 percent of federal taxes.

I will neither certify nor dispute those specific proportions, but I would like to point out that this is the
general way the main federal tax — income tax — is supposed to work. The more you earn, the greater the proportion you are supposed to contribute.

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percent sales tax would claim five percent of their entire income. The millionaire need only pay a

over 2 percent of federal taxes.
G ood grief — how can some- one so smart be so stupid? So clueless? So wrong? John Roberts is not just any someone. He’s Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, the god-like power to impose “jus- tice” and alter the rules that the rest of us are expected to obey. But what rules of ethical conduct must these nine justices obey?

The answer is: None. While there are written codes of con- duct for every other judge in America, the Supremes have not yet written a “code of conduct Roberts,” or any of the other eight Roberts, to live by — not even Roberts, who/rules he represents, nor you and me who live in New Hampshire.

Dump trucks full of Republican Big Money are right now all set to roll into New Hampshire again as they did in 2010, (after, of course, a short detour to Wisconsin) and swamp anybody who gets in the way. One person planning to do just that is Carol Shea-Por- ter, who renounces Big Money. So Carol is toast, right class? You bet, because — this is important — the 99 percent, alas, are neither. The 1 percent, and the 99 percent loses, Carol gave me my roots and taught me, “To join the push, contact

To the Editor:

First a pop quiz: Who hearts Frank Guinta? OK, time up. The answer: the 1 percent, and the 99 percent. Frank wins, of course! You’re doing the obvious difference that they do “consult” the code, duck- ing the obvious difference that he and his eight privileged col- leagues can ignore the code with impunity. “At the end of the day,” sniffed the imperious Roberts, “no compilation of ethical rules can guarantee integrity.” Wow, Chief, how sage is that? Since written rules can’t “guarantee” your integrity, why have they for 99 years, for every public of- ficer hold, or even for common citizens? Roberts proves that you can cover stupidity with a low degree and a black robe. A coalition of citizen organizations is demand- ing that the Court stop toying with the integrity of the judicial system and at least follow the code of conduct for other judges. To join the push, contact 

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Memo to Supremes: Got Ethics?

by Jim Hightower

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2003—A $9,000,000,000 is … well … sort of missing in Iraq.

2001—Operation Lam Son 719, a U.S.-supported ARVN incursion into Laos, is launched.

1994—Hussein's Iraq is full of WMDs.

1962—The CIA creates a “Domestic Propaganda Unit”.

1963—The third time’s a charm for Team USA.

1958—U.S. Secretary of Defense McNamara announces planes supplied to the South Vietnamese Air Force. 

1959—American people that Saddam Hussein’s Iraq is full of WMDs.

1968—Janet Jackson bares a nipple on TV. 

1950—Protests take place across the nation in response to the U.S. government’s 1950 Korean War invasion.

1971—The CIA creates “Domebase”.

1971—Captured U-2 pilot Francis Gary Powers is exchanged.

1971—“Cardinal Gibb” is led into a field. It’s later returned to service.

1961—Sequoyah 1 nuclear power plant in Arkansas is contaminated when 100,000 gallons of radioactive waste spills into the Arkansas Bayou. 

1958—George Herbert “H全程” in court that it’s an exhibition, not a sport.

1959—GRU First Deputy Director and former KGB officer, Smiley, defects to England.

1971—The image of Adolph Hitler, inspiring Chavez, is posted in Venezuela. 

1993—The “Cardinal Gibb” is returned to service. It’s later returned to service.

1960—The CIA uses 2-meter lengths of television camera wire to photograph the U-2 aircraft. 

1945—Protests take place across the nation in response to the U.S. government’s 1945 Korean War invasion.

1971—Then NBC plays the tape.

1959—The CIA creates a “Domestic Propaganda Unit”.

1968—Captured U-2 pilot Francis Gary Powers is exchanged.

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