
From: Gregory Brown <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, November 29, 2015 8:07 AM
To: undisclosed-recipients:
Subject: Greg Brown's Weekend Reading and Other Things.. 11/29/2015

DEAR FRIEND.....

The Truth is Out

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Newly Released Clinton Email Proves Bush & Blair Plotted Iraq War A Year Before Launching It

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For so many of our people in Congress who are lawyers, you would think that they would adhere to the old courtroom rule, "never ask a question that you don't know the answer" and as my grandmother would have said, "Curse and don't be surprised to find a worm when turning over a stone." Well in their attempt to find embarrassing emails that might damage Hillary Clinton's Presidential chances – especially there was some astonishing details hidden in Hillary Clinton's emails – just not what the Republicans thought it was. Newly released information indicates that then-President George W. Bush had reached a secret deal with British Prime Minister Tony Blair to invade Iraq nearly a year before the invasion took place. A secret meeting took place in April 2002, where Colin Powell wrote that "He [Blair] will present to you the strategic, tactical and public affairs lines that he believes will strengthen global support for our common cause," Powell wrote, adding that the prime minister has the skills to "make a credible public case on current Iraqi threat to international peace," according to Newsmax.

It flies in the face of Blair's public declaration that he was attempting to find a diplomatic solution to the manufactured "E2 crisis." It also reveals Blair's collusion with the Department of Defense in fabricating and selling the "E2 evidence" which convinced America that Saddam Hussein's regime had weapons of mass destruction (it didn't and that they were involved in 9/11 and planning to strike America again (they weren't). Tony Blair, desperate for the United Kingdom to regain some of its influence in the global balance of power, went along with everything Bush asked him to, including creating the fake narrative that Saddam Hussein had an unmanned aerial vehicle program that could deliver a CWMD "within 45 minutes."

It adds to the heaping mound of evidence that our nation was lied to, not just by our leader, but by those of our allies as well. The Iraq War will be remembered as one of the most catastrophic disasters both nation have ever brought upon themselves, the pinnacle of neoconservative arrogance and the hubris of American exceptionalism, preconceived even before 9/11 ever happened and organized to maximize the profits of defense contractors and fossil fuel companies like Vice President Dick Cheney's Halliburton, which made \$39 billion in profits over the course of the conflict. George Bush has a lot to answer for; it now appears that Mr. Blair does as well. Aren't these the same clowns who went after Hillary two decades ago suggesting that she organized an improper/illegal \$30,000 loan while working at the Rose Law Firm while her husband was Governor of Arkansas? Yet, tens of billions of non-bid contracts went to Bush's Vice President previously headed, should not be questioned. Sort of like Jeb Bush claiming that his brother kept America safe after 9/12, while saying nothing when his party went after Hillary Clinton over our American deaths in Benghazi. What hypocrites!!! And we are not just talking about just Bush and Blair...

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Here Are Some Highlights

Why have these memos come out now?

The U.S. courts have ruled that 30,000 emails received by Hillary Clinton when she was U.S. Secretary of State from 2001 to 2013 should be released. She may have asked for these documents to grasp the background to the Iraq War.

What was the Crawford summit?

The meeting between Blair and Bush at the President's Texas ranch in April 2002, 11 months before the outbreak of war. The pair spent long periods discussing Iraq without their advisers, leading to suspicion that they privately cut a deal

for the conflict. UK Ambassador Sir Christopher Meyer said it was impossible to know whether a deal was signed in blood'.

What did Blair say at Crawford?

At the start of the summit, Mr. Blair said: 'We're not proposing military action at this point in time.' For the whole of 2002, Blair claimed no decision had been taken and in the run-up to war. He said that Saddam Hussein could avoid conflict by co-operating with UN weapons inspectors.

What happened after Crawford?

In September 2002, in an attempt to prove Saddam was a threat, No 10 falsely claimed Saddam could deploy biological weapons 'within 45 minutes', and Mr. Blair went around the world trying to drum up UN backing for action against Iraq. Despite mass anti-war protests, Britain and America invaded Iraq in March 2003 without the backing of the UN.

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Had the allies prepared for 'the day after 9/11'?

The invasion was declared complete on April 15, 2003. But the reason for war proved spurious, and Saddam's removal left a power vacuum filled by warring factions which some say helped Islamic State rise.

Have the memos been seen by the Chilcot Inquiry?

It is not thought the £10million, six-year inquiry has asked to see American Government material

The documents, which were obtained a month ago by The Mail, are part of a batch of secret emails held on the private server of Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton which U.S. courts have forced her to reveal. Former Tory Shadow Home Secretary David Davis said: 'The memos prove in explicit terms what many of us have believed all along: Tony Blair effectively agreed to act as a frontman for American foreign policy in advance of any decision by the House of Commons or the British Cabinet. 'He was happy to launder George Bush's policy on Iraq and sub-contract British foreign policy to another country without having the remotest ability to have any real influence over it. And in return for what? 'For George Bush pretending Blair was a player on the world stage to impress voters in the UK when the Americans didn't even believe it themselves'. What a lackey Mr. Blair you were and are....

The Republican Debate used to be about who's nicer to immigrants

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So True

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Ahmed Abdel Hadi Cha=abi

(30 October 1944 – 3 November 2015)

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Whether or not you consider him a Manipulator or a Pawn he was definitely a Fraud

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He was interim Minister of Oil in Iraq in April–May 2005 and December 2005 – January 2006 and Deputy Prime Minister from May 2005 to May 2006. Once the white knight of the Bush/Cheney Administration's efforts to replace Saddam Hussein, Ahmed Abdel Hadi Chalabi who died on November 3, 2015 failed to win a seat in parliament in the December 2005 elections, and when the new Iraqi cabinet was announced in May 2006, he was not given a post. Once dubbed the "George Washington of Iraq" by American neoconservative supporters, he later fell out of favor and came under investigation by several U.S. government sources. Chalabi was the son of a prominent Shia family, one of the wealthy power elite of Baghdad, where he was born. Chalabi left Iraq with his family in 1956 and spent most of his life in the United States and the United Kingdom.

Chalabi was a controversial figure, especially in the United States, for many reasons. In the lead-up to the 2003 invasion of Iraq, the Iraqi National Congress (INC), with the assistance of lobbying powerhouse BKSJ & Associates, provided a major portion of the information on which U.S. Intelligence based its condemnation of the Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, including reports of weapons of mass destruction and alleged ties to al-Qaeda. Most, if not all, of this information has turned out to be false and Chalabi has been called a fabricator. That, combined with the fact that Chalabi subsequently boasted, in an interview with the British Sunday Telegraph, about the impact that their alleged falsifications had on American policy, led to a falling out between him and the U.S. government. Furthermore, Chalabi was found guilty in the Petra banking scandal in Jordan. In January 2012, a French intelligence official stated that they believed Chalabi to be an Iranian agent.

Ahmad Chalabi spent more than a decade working for the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, prides himself on his understanding of the United States and its history. "I know quite a lot about it," he told an American reporter in his Baghdad office in the new headquarters of the Iraqi National Congress, the exile opposition group that Chalabi helped found in 1992. As a young man, he said, he spent several years in America, earning an undergraduate and a master's degree in mathematics from M.I.T., and a Ph.D. in mathematics from the University of Chicago.

Chalabi began studying the uses of power in American politics, and the subject developed into a lifelong interest. One episode in American history particularly fascinated him, he said. "I followed very closely how Roosevelt, who abhorred the Nazis, at a time when isolationist sentiment was paramount in the United States, managed adroitly to persuade the American people to go to war. I studied it with a great deal of respect; we learned a lot from it. The Lend-Lease program committed Roosevelt to enter on Britain's side — so we had the Iraq Liberation Act, which committed the American people for the liberation against Saddam. The act, which Congress passed in 1998, made "regime change" in Iraq an official priority of the U.S. government; Chalabi had lobbied tirelessly for the legislation.

In 1977, he founded the Petra Bank in Jordan. In May 1989, the Governor of the Central Bank of Jordan, Mohammed Said Nabulsi, issued a decree ordering all banks in the country to deposit 35% of their reserves with the Central Bank. Petra Bank was the only bank that was unable to meet this requirement. An investigation was launched which led to accusations of embezzlement and false accounting. The bank failed, causing a \$350 million bail-out by the Central Bank. Chalabi fled the country before the authorities could react. Chalabi was convicted and sentenced in absentia for bank fraud by a Jordanian military tribunal.

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While still a fugitive, Chalabi headed the executive council of the INC, an umbrella Iraqi opposition group created in 1992 for the purpose of fomenting the overthrow of Saddam Hussein. The INC received major funding and assistance from the United States. Chalabi was involved in organizing a resistance movement among Kurds in northern Iraq in the early mid-1990s. When that effort was crushed and hundreds of his supporters were killed, Chalabi fled the country. Chalabi lobbied in Washington for the passage of the Iraq Liberation Act (passed October 1998). This earmarked US\$97 million to support Iraqi opposition groups. During the period from March 2000 to September 2003, the U.S. State Department paid nearly \$33 million to the INC, according to a General Accounting Office report released in 2004, in addition to tens of millions of black ops funding.

Before the Iraq War (2003), Chalabi enjoyed close political and business relationships with some members of the U.S. government, including some prominent neoconservatives within the Pentagon. Chalabi was said to have had political contacts within the Project for the New American Century, most notably with Paul Wolfowitz, a student of nuclear strategist Albert Wohlstetter, and Richard Perle. He also enjoyed considerable support among politicians and political pundits in the United States, most notably Jim Hoagland of The Washington Post, who held him up as a notable force for democracy in Iraq. He was a special guest of First Lady Laura Bush at the 2004 State of the Union Address.

Although the CIA was largely skeptical of Chalabi and the INC, information allegedly from his group (most famously from a defector codenamed "Curveball") made its way into intelligence dossiers used by President George W. Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair to justify an invasion of Iraq. "Curveball", Rafid Ahmed Alwan al-Janabi, fed officials hundreds of pages of bogus "firsthand" descriptions of mobile biological weapons factories on wheels and rails. Secretary of State Colin Powell later used this information in a U.N. presentation trying to garner support for the war, despite warnings from German intelligence that "Curveball" was fabricating claims. Since then, the CIA has admitted that the defector made up the story, and Powell said in 2011 the information should not have been used in his presentation.

As U.S. forces took control during the 2003 Invasion of Iraq, Chalabi returned under their aegis and was given a position on the Iraq interim governing council by the Coalition Provisional Authority. He served as president of the council in September 2003. He denounced a plan to let the UN choose an interim government for Iraq. "We are grateful to President Bush for liberating Iraq, but it is time for the Iraqi people to run their affairs," he was quoted as saying in The New York Times. In August 2003, Chalabi was the only candidate whose unfavorable ratings exceeded his favorable ones with Iraqis in a State Department poll. In a survey of nearly 3,000 Iraqis in February 2004 (by Oxford Research International, sponsored by the BBC in the United Kingdom, ABC in the U.S., ARD of Germany, and the NHK in Japan), only 0.2 percent of respondents said he was the most trustworthy leader in Iraq. A secret document written in 2002 by the British Overseas and Defense Secretariat reportedly described Chalabi as "a convicted fraudster popular on Capitol Hill."

In response to the WMD controversy, Chalabi told London's Daily Telegraph in February 2004, "We are heroes in error. As far as we're concerned, we've been entirely successful. That tyrant Saddam is gone and the Americans are in

Baghdad. What was said before is not important. The Bush administration is looking for a scapegoat." As Chalabi's position of trust with the Pentagon crumbled, he found a new political position as a champion of Iraq's Shi'ites (Chalabi himself was a Shi'ite). Beginning January 2004, Chalabi and his close associates promoted the claim that leaders around the world were illegally profiting from the Oil for Food program. These charges were around the same time that UN envoy Lakhdar Brahimi indicated that Chalabi would likely not be welcome in a future Iraqi government. Up until this time Chalabi had been mentioned a number of times by Bush/Cheney supporters in connection with possible future leadership positions. Chalabi contended that documents in his possession detailed the misconduct, but he did not provide any documents or other evidence. The U.S. sharply criticized Chalabi's Oil for Food investigation as undermining the credibility of its own.

An arrest warrant for alleged counterfeiting was issued for Chalabi on 8 August 2004, while at the same time a warrant was issued on murder charges against his nephew Salem Chalabi (at the time, head of the Iraqi Special Tribunal), while they both were out of the country with Chalabi returning to Iraq but was not arrested. Somehow Chalabi regained enough credibility to be made deputy prime minister in April 2005 and at the same time he was made acting oil minister. Chalabi and other members of the INC have been investigated for fraud involving the exchange of Iraqi currency, grand theft of both national and private assets, and many other criminal charges in Iraq. By 2010 it is estimated that Chalabi had amassed a personal fortune in the hundreds of millions of dollars, if not billions.

Detractors rage about his supply of fabricated intelligence on Iraqi weapons of mass destruction that supposedly tricked Washington into war. Supporters claim he was a heroic dissident who was never given the chance to transform his troubled country into paradise. The former is definitely true and the latter not as he played the role of a convenient enabler for the Bush/Cheney war in Iraq and if he had never existed, his backers and the American neocons would probably have conjured up a replacement to serve the same function.

With the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, he is one of the victors of the Iraqi War. Chalabi's legacy is a controversial one, serving at the center of the controversial WMD intelligence that justified the war, a matter that is contentious to this day. However, he played the political game well: As an exile who saw little chance of ever returning to Iraq, to dying in his native Baghdad, all made possible by a policy establishment in DC that was too willing to listen to his assessment that overthrowing Saddam would lead to a rosy future for Iraq. And without a doubt, Chalabi was a con artist par excellence, but the stream of claims of innocence by American media and politicians who supported him are acts of shameless con artistry at best.

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Obama Rejected Keystone XL Pipeline After 7 Years Of Review

And might not the Lauded Success Environments Claim

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Before doing victory laps as a result that two weeks ago President Obama finally decide to not approve the 1,760-mile, \$7 billion project that would have enable the transport of 830,000 barrels of oil per day from Canada's oil sands to U.S. refineries, environmentalist and others should consider what really might have happened— Obama did not cite the pipeline's contribution to emissions and ultimately climate change. Compared to greenhouse gases from industrial sources like power plants (which are the largest source of U.S. emissions) and vehicle tailpipe emissions, Keystone XL's impact would have been minimal. But he did say "approving this project would have undercut America's role as the "global leader" on combating climate change. "Not acting," Obama said, "is the biggest risk we face." Green groups praised the president's decision on Friday, calling it a "day of celebration";

Yes, the project's environmental impact was long a point of contention. In a major climate address in June 2013 Obama said the pipeline should only be approved if it "does not significantly exacerbate the problem of carbon pollution." The State Department's final environmental impact analysis released in January 2014 lent support to the pipeline's approval, concluding that it would not substantially increase emissions. But environmental advocates argued that construction of the northern portion would encourage increased production in the oil sands that would not be economical otherwise. They also pointed out that the oil produces substantially higher greenhouse gas emissions than conventional crude. And the Environmental Protection Agency told the State Department that it should re-evaluate those projections in light of current oil price trends.

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But as a wise man nicknamed Deep Throat once said, "Follow the money" and when looking beyond the obvious to see who are the moneyed losers and winners, I found that if the pipeline is completed the biggest losers would be the railroads who make tens of billions transporting crude, that might end up going through the Keystone Pipeline instead. Also, local producers (including the new fracking operators), whose prices might be undercut with a new abundance of crude oil coming from Canada. While the obvious winners are the Canadian producers, Gulf Coast refineries, pipeline builders and certain landowners. But also benefiting, are the railroads, since there is no additional restriction to transport Canadian crude oil or products. Therefore, every gallon of crude produce in Canada could eventually make its way to refineries and markets via truck, rail and boats, negating the perceived win, that Environmentalists are celebrating today....

As a liberal Democrat I was never against the Keystone Pipeline. First of all because it is definitely less of a danger to the environment than fracking, which has contaminated the water table in a number of states, as well as possibly

con=ributing to the increase of earthquakes. Secondly, a newer Keystone =ipeline could be used to replace older pipelines, many of which are 50, 60= 70 years-old, and in serious decay, disrepair and in desperate need to be=replaced. Finally, what will ultimately change our dependence on fos=il fuels is economics, in the same way that cheap oil prices has made many=fracking, deep water and artic exploration uneconomical, which has resulte= in their operations being curtailed and in many cases stopped. This=has to be a major plus for the environment. So killing the Keystone =ipeline may have extended our dependence on fossil fuels, which is the rev=erse of what most want and why we should always look beyond the obvious.◆=A0

21ST CE=TURY LYNCHING

As bad as this senseless murder was.... The cover-up by Chicago offi=ials and police was much worse

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By now you have seen articles in the media if =ot the video itself of seventeen year old Laquan McDonald who was shot 16 =imes (while walking at least 15 feet away) in a barrage of continua= fire well after the youth falls to the ground by a 14-year Chicago vetera= police officer Jason Van Dykeemptied his pistol and reloaded despite the =act that the teen was laying motionless on ground. This happened ove= a year ago and was pushed under the rug until Chicago city officials were=forced on Tuesday November 24, 2015 to release the police dashcam video.=C2◆ To show you how egregious which many called "an execution=/*i*" was, without the Laquan's family bringing a civil sui=, the City of Chicago immediately handed over a \$5 million settlement and =ggressively fought to keep the video of the shooting under lock and key.</=pan>

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For more than a year, community members have urged officials to releas= video of the shooting. The city was forced to act after a judge ordered t=e release of the video. The dashcam video was one of several collect=d from the scene. Alvarez said investigators were unable to download one, =nd another was too far away to be usable. Chicago's Cook Cou=ty State's Attorney Anita Alvarez backed city officials' denial th=t police had tampered with video evidence. The district manager for =he Burger King near the scene of the shooting has maintained for months th=t Chicago police

deleted the restaurant's security footage, which show=d the shooting. The fast food restaurant manager, Jay Darshane, told=NBC Chicago in May that police were given access to restaurant security recordings. When they left three hours later, about 86 minutes of footage covering the time of the shooting was missing, he said.

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According to police and court records, Van Dyke, 37, joined the department in 2001 and spent more than four years with a specialized unit since disbanded by police Superintendent Garry McCarthy — that aggressively went into neighborhoods experiencing spikes in violent crimes. Independent Police Review Authority records, Van Dyke has received 17 citizen complaints since 2006. At least three complaints in the last four years were for excessive force-related allegations, and no one accused him of making racial or ethnically biased remarks, according to the records. But then the Chicago police department is rotten to the core. For example, the data for 2015 shows that in more than 99 percent of the thousands of misconduct complaints against Chicago police officers, there has been no discipline. From 2011 to 2015, 97 percent of more than 28,500 citizen complaints resulted in no officer being punished, according to the files. Although very few officers were disciplined in the year covered by the data, African American officers were punished at twice the rate of their white colleagues for the same offenses, the data shows. And although black civilians filed a majority of the complaints, white civilians were far more likely to have their complaints upheld, according to the records.

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The sad thing is that this is not an anomaly or just something that happens in Ferguson= Baltimore and Chicago, because from Los Angeles, Houston, Cleveland, New Orleans and Charleston police have killed civilian people of color (many=unarmed) at an alarming rate. And paying \$6.5 million to Walther=Scott's family in Charleston, or \$5 million to Laquan McDonald's family is not a way to fix this vile problem. These rotten police officers have to be drummed out of their departments and the departments who protect them have to be forced to pay in more ways other than with taxpayer's money. Finally, for these rogue officers who claim to only fire at suspects because they feared for their lives, maybe they are in the wrong profession or definitely need better training. Whatever the case, these senseless killings of people of color by police and others has to be seriously addressed. More importantly, the fact that Chicago city officials and police tried to cover up Laquan McDonald's murder for more than a year was even worse....=C2 and this is my rant of the week.

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I am reminded of the graphic of a Middle Class white American woman juxtaposed next to an Arab woman in a burka, one holding a Bible and the other a Koran with both holding guns and the caption asking, "What's The Difference." As such, the inspiration of that reference today for me is John Feffer's recent article in the Huffington Post titled – Is Putin Really as Foolish as We Are? Because you would think that after its own disastrous nine year war that resulted in almost 15,000 Soviet deaths and more than 53,000 wounded, then watching the United States and its allies make the same folly for equally ridiculous reasons, one would think that even Vladimir Putin might be reluctant to enter into another war not directly on Russia's borders.

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But then Richard Nixon, another Cold War warrior, as well as considered one of the most duplicitous president in U.S. history actually knew that the U.S. air war in Southeast Asia was a dismal failure. Even as he was telling the media that the saturation bombings of Vietnam and Laos were "very effective," Nixon was privately acknowledging the opposite. "We have had 10 years of total control of the air in Laos and V.Nam," Nixon wrote to his secretary of state, Henry Kissinger, on January 3, 1972. "

The Obama administration has unleashed a similar air war in Syria and Iraq against the Islamic State. The results have been comparable to Nixon's "zilch." The Islamic State has not replaced its black flag with a white one nor has it shrunk appreciably in size. Obama's attempt to unseat Syrian leader Bashar al-Assad has not produced much either, other than increased violence and chaos in the poor, benighted country. The Pentagon's effort to train and re-insert "moderate" rebels into the country has proven so disastrous that the Obama administration recently suspended the project.

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Meanwhile, the CIA's rival plan to simply ship armaments to existing forces fighting against the government in Damascus hasn't yielded more than "zilch," at least according to recent reports. Except that the success that anti-Assad forces have had with anti-tank missiles helped persuade Russian President Vladimir Putin to intervene on the side of the Syrian government to forestall checkmate and prolonged stalemate. Since Putin is Russian, chess has been the go-to metaphor for portraying recent Kremlin strategy. No surprise, then, that Putin's move in Syria has been hailed (by some) as the brilliant gambit of a grandmaster. They're wrong. It's more like a desperate pawn sacrifice designed to save off the inevitably grisly endgame. Like Nixon, Putin would like us to think he's tricky. But as Feffer points out, "they're both just brutal tacticians of limited imagination."

Putin's Folly

Since the end of last month, the Russian government has sent fighter jets, tanks, drones and a couple hundred of soldiers to Syria. It has already conducted hundreds of airstrikes. It has even launched cruise missile strikes from ships anchored in the Caspian Sea at targets nearly a thousand miles away. The Russian government claims that it is targeting the Islamic State, but many of the air strikes appear to have hit other rebel groups fighting the Assad regime. And in the

short period that the air strikes have taken place, they've predictably generated the usual reports of "collateral damage," including 17 civilians in Talbiseh at the very outset on September 30.

The Russian moves, if only because they represent something fundamentally different in a conflict that has ground on for more than four years, have attracted enormous media attention. Putin's audacity has even garnered something approximating grudging respect from across the political spectrum. His speech at the UN last month, which heralded the more muscular Russian policy, qualified him as the "new sheriff in town" and his country as the "real powerbroker in the Middle East," according to conservative national security analyst John Schindler. Economist contributor Edward Lucas termed Putin's speech a "triumph" while his decisive intervention in Syria, in comparison to the blunders of the West, make the Russian leader seem "a responsible statesman, to whom we turn in desperation for help." Juan Cole, after dismissing the Obama administration efforts as ineffectual, concludes that "Putin knows what he wants and has an idea about how to achieve it."

Even for some on the left, Putin continues to represent a praiseworthy counterforce to American power and the kind of iron-fist response to the Islamic State that some crave. "Putin is not going to stop for anything or anyone," writes Mike Whitney at Counterpunch. "He's going to nail these guys while he has them in his gun-sights, then he's going to wrap it up and go home. By the time the Obama crew gets its act together and realizes that they have to stop the bombing pronto or their whole regime change operation is going to go up in smoke, Putin's going to be blowing kisses from atop a float ambling through Red Square in Moscow's first tickertape parade since the end of WW2."

It's safe to say that most military interventions look decisive at the beginning. That's when pundits and policymakers talk of "cakewalks" and "troops home by Christmas." But there's really no reason to believe that Russia's military intervention in Syria will produce results appreciably different from what the United States and its allies have already (not-quagmire" in Syria (though, of course, the president hasn't publicly acknowledged the quasi-quagmire into which he himself has tiptoed).

It's impossible to know what Putin hopes to achieve from this gambit other than to guarantee Russian involvement in whatever happens next. Perhaps all sides will throw up their hands and take refuge at the negotiating table, with Putin emerging, as he did after the chemical weapons compromise in September 2013, as the master diplomat. Or perhaps the war will continue to grind on, but with more firepower added to the equation and thus more casualties, more extremist reactions and more desperate refugees, with Putin playing the role of master spoiler who wants to pin the West down in an intractable conflict. In either case, Putin would earn his title as grandmaster of geopolitics.

I suspect, however, that Vladimir Putin is just as foolish and trigger-happy as any world leader with a large expeditionary force and the itch to use it. Attempting to save Bashar al-Assad in Syria is tantamount to trying to prop up Nguyen Van Thieu in South Vietnam in the 1960s. The Russian government will claim success for its air war -- just as the United States and allies do

for theirs - and there will no doubt be some tactical victories as the Assad government reclaims some rebel-held territory. But Putin will not likely accomplish the physically impossible task that Obama and others have already attempted: bombing a broken country back into shape. At what point will the Russian leader write a confidential note to Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov to confess that their strategy of "strategic bombing" has yielded zilch?

Is ego and acceptance as the other world superpower going to be worth this most recent excursion into international warfare? Maybe for Putin, who likes to be photographed riding a horse shirtless in winter is going to be worth the sacrifice. Because Putin's attempt at "shock and awe" in Syria has all the hallmarks of failed U.S. policies of the past. In the initial days, for instance, the Russian media has focused on the pinpoint accuracy of the air strikes in taking out "most" of the Islamic State's ammunition and heavy machinery. It will take some time before more critical reports - of Russian bombing of medical facilities or missiles that went astray in Iran - reach Putin's constituents.

Then there's the emphasis on the preemptive nature of the attacks. "George W. Bush famously said (more than once). Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev essentially said the same thing last week: "It's better to do it abroad rather than fight terrorism inside the country." Of course, the Russians have more to worry about. Neither the Taliban nor Saddam Hussein had any plans to attack the United States (al-Qaeda was a different matter). The Islamic State, meanwhile, has thrown a thousand Chechen fighters into battle, and who knows what might happen if these battle-hardened veterans ever make it back to Russia proper.

A handful of Russian tourists and hostages have died at the hands of Islamic extremists in the Middle East. A few of the Russian Marines now hunkered down in Syria will probably die as well, particularly now that the Homs Liberation Movement (part of the Free Syrian Army) has promised to use suicide bombers to weed out the Russians. Just this week, as a shot across the bow, insurgents shelled the Russian embassy in Damascus. But Russians will only feel the true consequences of Putin's actions when the next wave of retaliatory bombings strikes Russia itself. The Moscow subway was hit by two suicide bombers in 2010 and the Moscow airport was targeted in 2011. Just this week the Russian government has reportedly thwarted another attack on public transportation, allegedly organized this time by the Islamic State. Here, then, is where Putin's chess-playing skills reveal themselves to be sub-par. He is throwing his pieces into battle without protecting his flanks. The Russian public should brace itself for blowback.

This is the ugliest parallel with American follies. After all, the air wars that the Bush administration conducted in the 2000s continue to haunt the United States even after the dramatic toppling of the kings. Indeed, only as the wars continued in Iraq and Afghanistan long after Saddam and the Taliban no longer held power did the United States learn that a symmetrical game of chess was a poor metaphor for the strategies needed to address asymmetrical warfare against a determined adversary. Bombing a country to rubble only produces a flinty determination on the part of the survivors to fight back. As Fiffer also pointed out - It's a lesson that Nixon learned (too late), that Obama is struggling to learn (or perhaps struggling to teach his Republican opponents), and that Putin, in the arrogance of his power, probably thinks that he doesn't need to learn at all.

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As the “middle class” hollows out, whites who started life under relatively promising circumstances are finally seeing the floor fall out under them.

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It wasn't supposed to end this way. But this week America learned that the folks everyone thought had it better than most are suffering a fate just as bad as the rest of us, and by some measures, even worse.

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A demographic analysis of public health trends in recent years shows that middle-aged whites are living more miserable and sicker lives and also appear to be dying at a higher rate. From 1999 to 2013, Princeton University researchers observed a disturbing jump in deaths among whites aged 45 to 54. For other groups, including seniors and middle-aged blacks and Latinos, mortality fell, continuing positive health and demographic trends of the past few decades.

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Overall, non-Latino white midlife mortality ticked up by 34 deaths per 100,000. It's not quite an epidemic, but the cumulative death toll suggests a slow-burning affliction that affirms a cultural sense of decline: Across the 15-year period, the researchers calculated, “If the white mortality rate for ages 45–54 had held at their 1998 value...half a million deaths would have been avoided in the period 1999–2013—comparable to lives lost in the US AIDS epidemic through mid-2015.” Driving factors reflected social and public health patterns: suicide, disease (particularly liver problems) and “drug and alcohol poisoning.”

The rising mortality rate, according to the study, paralleled “self-reported declines in health, mental health, and ability to conduct activities of daily living, and increases in chronic pain and inability to work.” But the trends differed by education level, as those with a high school-level education or less experienced worse outcomes than the college-educated.

These socioeconomic factors converge against the backdrop of a shattered American Dream: In their analysis of the results, Deaton and co-author Anne Case write that since economic growth has sputtered since the 1970s, “with

widening income inequality, many of the baby-boom generation are the first to find, in midlife, that they will not be better off than were their parents.”

How does this figure into the public discourse on race and health? Rising white midlife death isn't so much a counterpoint to the narrative of racial segregation as it is a revelation about the long-term costs of structural inequality. As the “middle class” hollows out, whites who started life under more promising circumstances—when a high-school graduate could land a job for life on the assembly line — are finally seeing the floor fall out under them too. Arguably, they may have had a harder landing than the groups always stuck at the bottom; could drug use be a distressed response to that collective class trauma? Many have dropped out of the workforce. Displaced middle-aged manufacturing workers have watched old factories shutter and neighborhoods subsequently deteriorate in the aftermath of mass foreclosures.

Economic hardship among whites is most acutely reflected in rural regions where joblessness and social distress run rampant, youth flee to seek better prospects elsewhere, and poverty has risen faster than in cities.

The mortality pattern seems unique to the United States. Other wealthy countries—the UK, Australia, Canada and Sweden—continued to see declines in midlife mortality after 1998. Researchers speculate that aging Americans might suffer deeper distress due to eroding retirement security. Much of the workforce has shifted to less stable 401(k)-based retirement plans, while other countries have maintained guaranteed defined-benefit pensions. Meanwhile, what's left of the US pension system, which is concentrated in public-sector jobs, faces assaults by state legislators seeking to balance the budget on the backs of unionized civil servants.

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Opioid use is identified as a possible response to commonly reported health issues like chronic muscle pain, but the researchers noted that “long-term opioid use may exacerbate pain for some.” That's an understatement. According to the CDC, deaths from heroin overdoses have nearly quadrupled from 2002–13; heroin use among whites has more than doubled, often linked to abuse of prescription drugs. In another demographic twist, heroin use has exploded in rural and suburban neighborhoods (which could ironically prompt progressive drug-policy reforms that never caught on earlier, when drugs were seen as an urban black and Latino problem).

But heroin overdoses may be a symptom of another social pathology. The 15-year death spike among middle-aged whites tracks the slow bleed of neoliberalism: the massive offshoring of manufacturing jobs, financial booms and busts, corporate deregulation. All these statistics suggest that the need for government-sponsored social supports is growing just as the government is rolling back welfare (Bill Clinton's neoliberal welfare reform agenda was imposed shortly before the white midlife death patterns appeared), healthcare, and education resources (including workforce investment programs that were designed to aid dislocated older workers). The same generation has suffered from the collapse of institutions that once helped anchor the working class: active unions or just common workplaces in factory towns.

This aspect of public health may get lost in the statistics: the community cohesion that gives life meaning. Before these people lost their health or succumbed to despair, many may have lost something more vital: a sense of connection to the wider world. The downward leveling of society, with health crises penetrating a relatively privileged group, reveals a different kind of connection: the interwoven hardships in the fraying social fabric — a shared fate we only see when the seams come undone.

Michelle Chen – The Nation – November 6, 2015

Today's Republican Party is Not the Same Party of my Dad's

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I ran across an interesting article in Politico magazine by Michael Lind – Days of Desperation – trying to explain why in the current Presidential primary season run up with establishment GOP candidates like Jeb Bush and John Kasich are receiving almost no traction, while the outsiders Ben Carson “whose views sound like a grab bag of life philosophies who is barely identifiable as a conservative by any standard measure of ideology” have seized a majority of Republican support according to almost all of the national polls. Neither exposing the long held views and values of Dwight Eisenhower, Richard Nixon, Jacob Javits, Clifford P. Case, Nelson Rockefeller Earl Warren and other architects of the Modern Republican Party, including conservatives like William F. Buckley, Jr, Ronald Reagan and my Father who headed the Black Republican wing in New York in the 1950s/60s, under Nelson Rockefeller.

It's an excellent question. And maybe it's time we stopped blaming the lack of traction experienced by establishment conservatives like Bush, Kasich, and Chris Christie on things like personality and debating skill, and started talking again about that thing known as “the conservative movement.” And as Michael Lind says – Maybe the real problem is less Jeb's awkwardness, or Kasich's personality, or Christie's New Jersey travails, than an issue that runs much deeper. The establishment candidates in this year's Republican primary nomination campaign are out there reciting all the formulas that worked for Ronald Reagan and the two Bushes — supply-side tax cuts and more military spending. Yet the old-time conservative religion doesn't seem to fire up the congregation, many of whose members have become idol-worshippers of strange new gods like Trump and Carson.

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Why isn't the ol-time conservative religion working to fire people up any more? Maybe the reason is that it's really, really old and decrepit, it hasn't worked and as such, many working class Republicans, who have not benefited from trillions of dollars awarded to the Top 1% and large corporations through trickle-down supply-side policies, are not openly in revolt of any candidates who are offering the same stale recipes. The reason for this open anger has been intensified by the fanning of partisan flames by the party elite and the same tactics used against the Clinton and Obama Administration seeded the discontent of outsider movement.

I can testify to this as a refugee from the collapse of movement conservatism a generation ago.

True, the Republican Party itself lives on. Republicans dominate two of the three branches of the federal government, Congress—both House and Senate—and the Supreme Court. Below the federal level, the GOP is enjoying its greatest successes in generations. Today, Republicans enjoy total control of 60 percent of state legislatures and partial control of 76 percent. Only at the presidential level have the Democrats enjoyed a majority in recent electoral cycles.

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Today no one is quite sure what the Republican Party's vision is or should be any more — least of all those hapless "establishment" presidential candidates who are flailing away out on the trail. The only thing for certain is that saying you are against anything has more gravitas than trying to explain a solution. These new workers are responding to a superannuated conservative ideology that is increasingly disconnected not only from the values of the larger society but from the values and interests of Republicans themselves.

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As Michael Lind points out – If the conservative movement were a person, it would soon qualify for Social Security. Today's legacy right originates 60 years ago as "movement conservatism." It was born with the founding of William F. Buckley, Jr.'s National Review in 1955. In 1964, movement conservatives captured the Republican presidential nomination for Barry Goldwater. They lost the general election that year, but in 1980 and 1984 the White House was won by a leader of the movement, Ronald Reagan.

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Yet by the 1980s, movement conservatism was running out of steam. Its young radicals had mellowed into moderate statesman. By the 1970s, Buckley and his fellow conservatives had abandoned the radical idea of "rollback" in the Cold War and made their peace with the more cautious Cold War liberal policy of containment. In the 1960s, Reagan denounced Social Security and Medicare as tyrannical, but as president he did not try to repeal and replace these popular programs. When he gave up the confrontational evil-empire rhetoric of his first term toward the Soviet Union and negotiated an end to the Cold War with Mikhail Gorbachev in his second term, many conservatives felt betrayed.

Then there was Goldwater, “Mr. Conservative.” Always first and foremost a libertarian, he lashed out in the 1980s at the religious right movement led by Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell. In the 1990s, orthodox conservatives denounced him as a liberal for supporting environmental protections and gay rights. Indeed, it’s fair to say that the three great projects of the post-1955 right — repealing the New Deal, ultra-hawkishness (first anti-Soviet, then pro-Iraq invasion) and repealing the sexual/culture revolution—have completely failed. Not only that, they are losing support among GOP voters.

This is nothing less than a failure of conservatism itself. After Buckley, Reagan and Goldwater had jettisoned much of their earlier hard-edged conservatism, there should have been an intellectual reformation on the American right in the 1990s. And there were a number of candidates for a redesigned conservative ideology. Reagan brain truster James Pinkerton wrote of a “new paradigm” that would accept the need for government but make it more flexible. David Brooks and Bill Kristol called for “national greatness conservatism” in the tradition of Lincoln and Teddy Roosevelt. A more populist alternative was offered by Pat Buchanan, a mix of nativism, protectionism and “culture war.” But instead of fading from the scene and opening the way to new thinking, old-fashioned Buckley-Goldwater-Reagan conservatism came back, in an even more radical form in the 2000s, catching me (by then an ex-neoconservative) and others by surprise.

When George W. Bush was elected, like many others I expected him to combine the “kinder and gentler” domestic policy of his father with the realist foreign policy symbolized by his father, Jim Baker and Brent Scowcroft. Instead W. doubled down on all the elements of the old “80s conservative movement” policy and left utter wreckage in his wake. Reagan had wrecked the budget with his tax cuts for the rich, but later in his two terms he presided over numerous tax increases. George W. Bush pushed through budget-wrecking tax cuts for the rich again, invoking the same supply-side theory that had been discredited in the 1980s. Reagan left Social Security alone. George W. Bush made the partial privatization of Social Security—long the holy grail of the libertarian right—a priority of his second term. That bombed with the public.

Reagan chose his battles carefully— withdrawing from Lebanon and invading tiny Grenada. Following 9/11, George W. Bush not only invaded Afghanistan but also invaded and occupied Iraq, which had nothing to do with the Al Qaeda attacks and posed no serious threat to the U.S. or its allies. The country is still paying for that mistake more than a decade later, and its reverberations have robbed neoconservatives of most of their credibility.

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Reagan was careful to distance himself from the religious right while paying it lip service. George W. Bush and Karl Rove chose to capitalize on hostility to gay rights and gay marriage for partisan purposes. As president, therefore, W. showed far greater fidelity to the objectives and values of movement conservatism than Reagan himself had done. The result? A voter backlash inspired by the bloody debacles in Iraq and Afghanistan that helped Democrats win back Congress in 2006 and the White House in 2008. Meanwhile, Bush’s Social Security privatization plan was so unpopular among Republican voters that a GOP-controlled Congress did not even bring it to a vote. What caused this peculiar Indian summer of radicalized movement conservatism in the Bush years? I think that the replacement of a unified conservative movement by three parallel movements played a major role.

The original conservative movement of Buckley and his allies was called “fusionism” because it sought to fuse three strands: free-market economics, militant and militarized anticommunism, and social traditionalism. Once conservatives wove this into a comprehensive political vision. But as time went on that vision started to come apart, and in the hands of different right-wing groups each strand grew more and more radicalized and unrealistic. From the 1960s to the 1980s, each of these strands found a home in a distinct movement: libertarianism, neo-conservatism and the religious right. Each of these had their own magazines, their own think tanks, their own activists.

From the libertarians, the right wing of the Republican Party took radical schemes for blowing up Social Security and Medicare and replacing them with Rube Goldberg systems of vouchers and tax credits and savings accounts. But establishment conservatives rejected libertarian isolationism in foreign policy and libertarian views on sex, drugs and rock ‘n’ roll.

Many of the neoconservatives were former Cold War liberals, at ease with the post-New Deal welfare state and organized labor. But the conservative establishment took from them only their bellicose foreign policy ideas. From evangelical Protestant members of the religious right the establishment took opposition to abortion, gay rights and pornography, while ignoring the unease felt by many religious conservatives about unfettered commercialism.

To a large extent, the three right-wing movements allowed themselves to be co-opted by the conservative establishment of the GOP in this way. Instead of trying to work out comprehensive public policies, libertarians specialized in economic policy, neoconservatives specialized in foreign policy, and religious conservatives specialized in determining licit and illicit sex and contraception. And this specialization led to radicalization. Adherents of a coherent public philosophy who aspire to govern have to weigh costs and benefits. But activists in a single-issue movement can gain attention and raise money by pushing extreme ideas with no regard for their effects on other areas of policy. This explains, I think, why the separate and specialized libertarian, neoconservative and religious right movements have often been far more extreme than the original members of Buckley’s fusionist conservative movement were.

It is this incoherent package of ideas — not the product of a single fused conservative movement, but rather a selection from three parallel single-issue movements on the right — that has formed the orthodoxy of the Republican Party, ever since the acolytes of Goldwater and Reagan succeeded in marginalizing the formerly dominant Rockefeller and Eisenhower and Nixon Republicans. And it is this incoherent package of ideas that is being recycled by Republican presidential candidates today, more than three decades after Reagan effectively abandoned it after winning the White House.

Thus you have the spectacle of insiders like Jeb Bush, Kasich and Christie trying to sell policies that were unworkable even in the Reagan years and since have become far more radical and therefore less palatable. Once again, as in previous electoral cycles, candidates for the Republican presidential nomination unveil tax plans that will provide the biggest gains to the rich, invoking supply-side economics to support the claim that these tax cuts will make up for lost revenue with increased growth. Insiders like Bush, Kasich and Christie and outsiders like Carson promise to cut Social Security or phase out Medicare. While the libertarians are promised the realization of their tax and budget fantasies, the religious right is treated to denunciations of Planned Parenthood. And all Republican candidates except Rand Paul call for more defense spending and more military action abroad. That's in the playbook, too.

All of which raises an interesting question: Does anyone in the Republican Party actually believe the whole package of libertarian economics, neoconservative militarism and religious right social reaction? Outside of the professional conservative establishment—Fox News journalists, right-wing radio personalities like Rush Limbaugh, career conservative think-tank apparatchiks — are there any voters or donors who are true believers in the right-wing catechism?

The evidence suggests otherwise. The Republican donor class tends to be libertarian and globalist. The Republican voter class tends to be populist, protectionist and nationalist. The legacy movement conservative machine finds it increasingly difficult to straddle these divides. The stale formulas of 50-year-old movement conservatism may not prevent a Republican from winning the White House. But even if Republicans control all three branches of government in 2017, they cannot govern on the basis of inherited conservative ideology.

Even if Republicans achieve a supermajority at all levels of U.S. government, the right-wing program will not be carried into operation. Social Security and Medicare will not be abolished and replaced by some elaborate system of savings accounts dreamed up at the Cato Institute. These middle-class programs are too popular, not least with Republican voters. A Republican president could unleash disastrous new wars of choice, like George W. Bush's war in Iraq and Barack Obama's war in Libya. But the neoconservative dream of a benign Pax Americana, in which China, Russia and other powers tremble before the might of Uncle Sam, is dead, never to be revived.

A unified Republican government could refuse to add new protections for racial, sexual and gender minorities. But even a Republican-majority Supreme Court is not going to repeal Roe v. Wade or allow states to outlaw gay marriage. If these are the goals of conservatism, then the conservative movement is effectively dead, even if people who call themselves conservative Republicans keep getting elected.

Michael Lind points this out as an apostate and an outsider. But at some point, iconoclasts within the Republican Party are going to rebel against the legacy of the dead ideas of the age of Buckley, Goldwater and Reagan. They will not

necessarily be progressives in any sense. They may call themselves conservatives. But their conservatism will take new forms, relevant to the early 21st century, not the mid-20th century.

Recently, a diverse group of conservative thinkers like Yuval Levin of National Affairs and Republican policymakers like Sen. Mike Lee of Utah have been dubbed "reformocons." Is the long-expected conservative intellectual reformation here at last? So far, there is little evidence. Their policy proposals are mostly minor tweaks and tax credits. House Speaker Paul Ryan has been described as a Young Turk, but his plan to voucherize and privatize entitlements is half-century-old libertarian orthodoxy. The reformocons are the Gorbachevs of the right. They want to reform the system without questioning its fundamental premises. What the Republican Party could use instead are a few Boris Yeltsins, willing to abandon the old orthodoxy altogether and start afresh.

It's about time. Today, we are nearly twice as far from 1962, when Milton Friedman published *Capitalism and Freedom*, than Friedman was from the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932. When he founded *National Review* in 1955, William F. Buckley, Jr. was closer in time to William McKinley than to Barack Obama. The particular synthesis of free market economics, hawkish foreign policy and social reaction that defined movement conservatism was the product of particular circumstances half a century ago.

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Many of the issues that divide today's left and right might continue to divide conservatives from progressives tomorrow. Any conservative movement whose major voting bloc is the white working class is likely to object to affirmative action at the expense of non-Hispanic whites and also to resent means-tested welfare programs, as distinct from universal earned benefits for which working-class Americans are eligible. The other major constituency of the Republican Party, the business community, will continue to object to progressive policies—in the area of environmental regulation, for example—that impose excessive costs on businesses.

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But it is safe to say that if representatives of working-class Republicans and the Business Roundtable sat down to hammer out a Republican Party platform, it would differ substantially in other areas from the agenda of the legacy conservative movement. Most working-class Republicans of all races support and need Medicare and Social Security. And business-class Republicans for the most part have reason to support the Export-Import Bank, along with public investment in useful infrastructure and basic R&D. A Republican Party that reflected the actual interests and values of both its popular and elite constituencies would probably have nothing to do with quixotic libertarian crusades against the Ex-Im Bank and middle-class entitlements of the kinds promoted by the Koch brothers and the Club for Growth. And as Michael Lind says – So maybe Donald Trump is on to something after all.

Shouldn't You Be Told What You Are Buying

Genetically Engineered Salmon Approved for Consumption

And Stores Don't Have to Tell You.

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I recently read an article by Andrew Pollack in the New York Times that Federal regulators on November 19, 2015 approved a genetically engineered salmon as fit for consumption, making it the first genetically altered animal to be cleared for American supermarkets and dinner tables. The approval by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration caps a long struggle for AquaBounty Technologies, a small company that first approached the F.D.A. about approval in the 1990s. The agency made its initial determination that the fish would be safe to eat and for the environment more than five years ago.

The approval of the salmon has been fiercely opposed by some consumer and environmental groups, which have argued that the safety studies were inadequate and that wild salmon populations might be affected if the engineered fish were to escape into the oceans and rivers. "This unfortunate, historic decision disregards the vast majority of consumers, many independent scientists, numerous members of Congress and salmon growers around the world, who have voiced strong opposition," Wenonah Hauter, executive director of Food & Water Watch, said in a statement. Within hours of the agency's decision on Thursday, one consumer advocacy group, the Center for Food Safety, and other organizations would file a lawsuit challenging the approval.

The AquaAdvantage salmon, as it is known, is an Atlantic salmon that has been genetically modified so that it grows to market size faster than a non-engineered farmed salmon, in as little as half the time. "The F.D.A. has thoroughly analyzed and evaluated the data and information submitted by AquaBounty regarding the AquaAdvantage salmon and determined that they have met the regulatory requirements for approval, including that food from the fish is safe to eat," Bernadette Dunham, director of the agency's Center for Veterinary Medicine, said in a statement.

F.D.A. officials said on Thursday that the process took so long because it was the first approval of its kind. People involved in the application suspect that the Obama administration delayed approval because it was wary of a political backlash. The officials said the fish would not have to be labeled as being genetically engineered, a policy consistent with its stance on foods made from genetically engineered crops. However, it issued draft guidance as to wording that companies could use to voluntarily label the salmon as genetically engineered or to label other salmon as not genetically engineered.

The fish are supposed to be raised inland in contained tanks to lessen the chances that they will escape into the wild. AquaBounty and its supporters say this will also be less stressful on the environment than using pens in the ocean. And it could eventually allow the fish to be raised in the United States, rather than being imported, as most farmed Atlantic salmon is. For now, however, the fish are being raised in Panama, from eggs produced in Prince Edward Island, Canada. If the salmon were bred or raised elsewhere, for marketing to Americans, that would require separate approvals.

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However, moving beyond Canada and Panama seems to be the plan, according to a regulatory filing by AquaBounty a year ago. It said at that time that after winning F.D.A. approval it would look to build a hatchery in the United States and expand the one in Canada to sell more eggs to fish farmers, who would then grow the salmon to market size. AquaBounty said it might also grow salmon from the eggs itself. In addition to the United States, it said it eventually hoped to sell the salmon in Canada, Argentina, Brazil and China.

The approval could and will help other efforts to develop genetically modified animals. Scientists and biotechnology industry executives have complained that the long, unexplained delay in approving the salmon was a deterrent to the field. Several other attempts to develop genetically engineered animals for consumption like a pig whose manure would be less polluting, have fallen by the wayside.

Now, however, there has been a surge of interest in developing new genetically altered farm animals and pets because new techniques, including one known as Crispr-Cas9, allow scientists to edit animal genomes rather than add genes from other species. That has made it far easier to create altered animals. Scientists in China, for instance, recently created goats with more muscle and longer hair. Researchers in Scotland used gene editing to create pigs resistant to African swine fever. It is not yet clear whether animals created this way would fall under F.D.A. regulation.

The Advantage salmon contains a growth hormone gene from the Chinook salmon and a genetic switch from the ocean pout, an eel-like creature that keeps the transplanted gene continuously active, whereas the salmon's own growth hormone gene is active only parts of the year. The company has said the fish can grow to market weight in 18 to 20 months, compared with 28 to 36 months for conventionally farmed salmon.

Opponents of the fish say that if the bigger fish were to escape, they could outcompete wild salmon for food or mates. Among the opponents have been members of Alaska's congressional delegation, who say they are worried about the effects on the image and health of wild salmon. "This harebrained decision goes to show that our federal agencies are incapable of using common sense," Representative Don Young, a Republican, said in a statement.

But company scientists have dismissed these concerns. William Muir, a professor of animal sciences at Purdue University, said the fish posed no risk to the environment. "In contrast, the current practice of using wild caught salmon as a food source is not sustainable; our oceans are overfished," he said in a statement. "This development provides a safe and sustainable alternative." The F.D.A. said on Thursday that there were multiple physical barriers in the Canada and Panama facilities to prevent any escape. The salmon were also made sterile to prevent reproduction in the event they do escape, although the sterilization technique is not foolproof.

The F.D.A. regulates genetically engineered animals as veterinary drugs using the argument that the gene inserted into the animal meets the definition of a drug. Critics have branded this an inadequate solution intended to squeeze a new technology into an old regulatory framework. They say the F.D.A. is not as qualified as other government agencies to do environmental assessments. The White House is now reviewing the entire framework for regulating genetically engineered products. The F.D.A. said that to approve the salmon, it determined that the fish was safe to eat, that the inserted genetic elements did not harm the fish itself, and that the company had adequately proved that the salmon grew faster.

The only good news is that despite the approval, it is likely to be at least two years before any of the salmon reaches supermarkets, and at first it will be in tiny amounts. As it is not clear how well the salmon will sell. Some leading supermarkets have already said, in response to the vocal opposition, that they have no plans to sell it.

But the bad news is that the company and supermarkets don't have to tell consumers that they are buying genetically modified salmon. Shouldn't you have the right to know what is in the food that you are buying, cooking and serving to friends and family? I am not against technology and progress. I just believe that consumers have the right to know what they are buying and how it was raised, created and/or modified.

THIS WEEK'S QUOTE
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THIS IS BRILLIANT

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BEST VIDEO OF THE WEEK

During this eight minute video watch the painter create wonderful m=gc....

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... Simply Amazing ...

THI= WEEK's MUSIC

Bonnie Raitt

This week I would like to share th= music of Bonnie Lynn Raitt is an American blues singer, songwriter and sl=de guitar player. Her mellifluous voice, accomplished guitar playing=and classic catalog of blues, folk, R&B, and pop songs have made her o=e of the most acclaimed artists of her generation. During the 1970s,=Raitt released a series of roots-influenced albums which incorporated elem=nts of blues, rock, folk and country. In 1989 after several years of=critical acclaim but little commercial success she had a major return to f=rm with the release of her album Nick of Time. The follo=ing two albums Luck of the Draw (1991) and Longing in Their Hea=ts (1994) were also multi-million sellers generating several hit singles, includ=ng "Something to Talk About", "Love Sneakin' =p On You", and the ballad "I Can't Make You Love Me</=>" (with Bruce Horns=y on piano).

Born in Burba=k, California on November 8, 1949 and the daughter of Broadway musical sta= John Raitt and his first wife, pianist Marjorie Haydock, she began playin= guitar at an early age and later gained notice for her bottleneck-style g=itar playing. After graduating from Oakwood Friends School in Poughk=epsie, New York, in 1967 Raitt entered Radcliffe College majoring in socia= relations and African Studies. During her second year and at the urging o= Blues promoter Dick Waterman, she took a semester off and moved to Philad=lphia with a number of local musicians, which changed everything

=span style="font-size:12pt;line-height:17.1200008392334px;font-family:Ge=rgia,serif">In the fall of 1970, while opening for Mississippi Fred McDowe=l at the Gaslight Cafe in New York, she was seen by a rep=rter from Newsweek Magazine, who began to spread word of her p=rformance. Scouts from major record companies were soon attending her show= to watch her play. She eventually accepted an offer with Warner Bro=. who soon released her debut album, Bonnie Raitt,◆=A0in 1971. The album was warmly received by the music press, many of=whom praised her skills as an

interpreter and as a bottleneck guitarist; at the time, very few women in popular music had strong reputations as guitarists.

While admired by those who saw her perform, and respected by her peers, Raitt gained little public acclaim for her work. Her critical stature continued to grow but record sales remained modest. Her second album, *Give It Up*, was released in 1972 to universal acclaim; though many critics still regard it as her best work, it did not change her commercial fortunes. 1973's *Takin' My Time* was also met with critical acclaim but these notices were not matched by the sales. Her breakthrough album *Sweet Forgiveness* in 1977 gave Raitt her first commercial breakthrough when it yielded a hit single in her cover of "Runaway."

More than just a best-selling artist, respected guitarist, expressive singer, and accomplished songwriter, Bonnie Raitt has become an institution in American music. Raitt has received 10 Grammy Awards. She is listed as number 50 in *Rolling Stone* magazine's list of the 100 Greatest Singers of All Time and number 89 on their list of the 100 Greatest Guitarists of All Time. On top of this, in 1995 Raitt became the first woman guitarist to have a guitar named for her. All royalties from the sale of Fender's Bonnie Raitt Signature Series Stratocaster go to programs to teach inner-city girls to play guitar. I remember meeting her in the early 1970s in Cambridge, Massachusetts before stardom and even then we all agreed that she was going to have a lasting career. Her ballad "I Can't Make You Love Me" is one of my all-time favorite songs. So with this I again invite you to enjoy the musical genius of Ms. Bonnie Raitt who truly is one of the best....

Bonnie Raitt – Have A Heart -- <https://youtu.be/b9L0ewWvge8> <<https://youtu.be/b9L0ewWvge8>>

Bonnie Raitt – Nick Of Time -- <https://youtu.be/CR4LYkYX1yw>

Bonnie Raitt – I Can't Make You Love Me -- <https://youtu.be/zmK1H6EXUYs> <<https://youtu.be/zmK1H6EXUYs>>
<https://youtu.be/8-xjhiNpAkw>

Bonnie Raitt – Something To Talk About -- <https://youtu.be/BQLpRBDrh8> <<https://youtu.be/BQLpRBDrh8>>

Bonnie Raitt – Angel from Montgomery -- <https://youtu.be/toJ3ZYWRh24> <<https://youtu.be/toJ3ZYWRh24>>

Bonnie Raitt – Burning Down The House -- <https://youtu.be/eqJcCmxZYdM> <<https://youtu.be/eqJcCmxZYdM>>

Bonnie Raitt – Road Tested -- <https://youtu.be/OTAEAKzOKMg>

Bonnie Raitt – Love Me Like a Man -- <https://youtu.be/u--zzAkDHBc> <<https://youtu.be/u--zzAkDHBc>>

Bonnie Raitt – Something To Talk About -- <https://youtu.be/mJ=8TVYNFro>

Bonnie Raitt – Thing Called Love -- <https://youtu.be/krF6Lp=XODc>

Bonnie Raitt, Keb Mo  No Gettin' Over You --  https://youtu.be/0iMadZk9o_U
<https://youtu.be/0iMadZk9o_U>

John Lee Hooker & Bonnie Raitt - I'm In The Mood -- <https://youtu.be/rT-FoZt95D4> <<https://youtu.be/rT-FoZt95D4>>

B.B. King & Bonnie Raitt - Night Life -- <https://youtu.be/CQJN8L8-ozU> <<https://youtu.be/CQJN8L8-ozU>>

Bonnie Raitt & Norah Jones <=> Tennessee Waltz -- https://youtu.be/zzDUi_L6MzA <https://youtu.be/zzDUi_L6MzA>

Bonnie Raitt, Tracy Chapman, Jeff Beck & Beth Hart - Sweet Home Chicago -- https://youtu.be/f56_Eg4i89c
<https://youtu.be/f56_Eg4i89c>

Bonnie Raitt w. Crosby, Stills and Nash  Love Has No Pride -- <https://youtu.be/-nmPdUiT5ks> <<https://youtu.be/-nmPdUiT5ks>>

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I hope that you have enjoyed this week's offering and wish you and yours a great rest of the Thanksgiving holiday and week....

Sincerely,

Greg Brown

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<=ont size="1">Gregory Brown

US: 

Fax: 

Skyp: 