

IN DIRE NEED OF CREATIVE EXTREMISTS

Martin Luther King's "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" is more than 50 years old, yet it reads like it was written yesterday. In that letter, King identified "the great stumbling block in the stride toward freedom" not as the hoodwearing Klanners or the politically powerful White Citizens Council folks, but the Moderate. Fortunately, King also identified the cure to that block, if only we'd embrace it.

LYSOL AND UV RAYS: RUNNING A PANDEMIC LIKE A REALITY TV SHOW

Three months in, Trump is still trying to manage a pandemic like he's the star of a Reality TV Show.

TRUMP'S MEDICAL QUACKERY EXPOSES THE PRESS' BOTH-SIDES QUACKERY

Some in the press are still treating Trump's insane rantings not as newsworthy themselves, but instead as a matter of both sides dispute.

ON TRUMP'S COVID RALLIES: LYING AND BULLYING ARE DIFFERENT THINGS

Ben Smith argued today that Trump's rallies are only about politics, not public health, and so we should stop debating whether media outlets should cover them. But Trump's lies are a public health menace.

THE GLENN GREENWALD VERSUS THE JULIAN ASSANGE CHARGES, COMPARED

The retaliatory indictment of Glenn Greenwald in Brazil has raised comparison with the US indictment of Assange. This post tries to unpack the similarities and differences.

HOW PUTIN GOT IN TRUMP'S (AND SO, ALL OF OUR) HEAD

The way in which Trump's retweet of a Putin headline has gone viral was utterly predictable.

IN EPSTEIN'S WAKE: MIT MEDIA LAB, DIRTY MONEY, AND SWARTZ [UPDATE]

MIT Media Lab is in upheaval after the disclosure that its organization accepted financial support from now-deceased pedophile Jeffrey Epstein. His poisonous reach continues beyond the grave.

TED STEVENS, THE "TOOBZ", AND THE IDIOCY OF THE INTERNET

Alright, this will be a fairly short post, but I would like to remind people of some things. Namely, regarding Ted Stevens. As background, Marcy wrote a serious, and important, post on the Trumps Organization's



curious, and semi-hilarious, use of Microsoft. And, yes, Marcy is right, it was amazingly stupid. From clackers whining that Hillary Clinton had insecure internet. If it was not so

stupid, it would be extra laughable.

But I want to cut back to something different. In comments, Rayne Loled at Ted Stevens and, then, a relatively new commenter (like just today as far as I can tell), "CJ" chimed in with:

Bizarrely, it's not an entirely bad metaphor, though that's probably accidental on his part. See, e.g., Andrew Blum's "Tubes: A Journey to the Center of the Internet".

This is bunk. Blum, and his book, tried to make hay off of Stevens, and at his expense, but without giving him much of his due, nor acknowledging how the "tubes" of the internet falsely allowed the demonization of Stevens and cheerleader his prosecution. A prosecution that turned out to be false and craven. In a review in the New York Times in 2012, Dwight Garner noted:

Reading this, you wish Mr. Stevens, who died in an airplane crash in 2010, were here to savor it. "Inside those tubes (by and large) are glass fibers," the author continues. "Inside those fibers is light. Encoded in that light is, increasingly, us."

That is exactly right, although Blum never really went deeper into the fraud by the Department of Justice that took Ted Stevens down before his untimely demise by plane crash.

So, as a bit of retrospective:

Say what you will about Ted Stevens, and much of that may be fair. But what was done to him at the end was wrong and a travesty. And the DOJ could not even deal with that then. Much less the pervasive and consuming wrong that is at hand today with Bill Barr and the DOJ he now administers.

For anybody that does not remember just how egregious and blatant the government/DOJ action against Ted Stevens was, here is one of my takes from 2008, and yet another in followup, from 2012.

You can joke about Toobz Stevens, and we have here before, but what happened to him was a complete travesty of justice. And there are serious lessons from that to keep in mind today. Without the “toobz” of the internet, I am not sure the reckless and false case against Stevens could have ever made it as far as it did. There is great irony in that, and it is a lesson that ought remain remembered, not just joked about.

That was a different, and in popular lore, more benevolent and honest era. So, what do you think are the odds for far worse from Trump and Barr? Somewhere, Ted Stevens has an idea.

IT IS OBJECTIVELY FALSE THAT TRUMP PROVIDED UNPRECEDENTED COOPERATION; STOP PARROTING RUDY CLAIMING HE DID

The emphasis on Trump’s submission of his open book test to Mueller should be on the President’s claim to Executive Privilege even before he took an oath to protect and defend the Constitution. Yet because so many journalists simply parroted Rudy Giuliani’s claims that Trump offered unprecedented cooperation, the emphasis has been the opposite.

THE INFOWARS EMBED IN THE CNN FIRST AMENDMENT LAWSUIT

While I'm happy CNN is suing the White House for revoking Jim Acosta's press hard pass, I'm not a fan of how they've argued the case, as it seems to argue for a privilege, not a right.