

TUESDAY: IN A SEASON OF CRIME

*Ride the train, I'm far from home
In a season of crime, none need atone
I kissed your face*

– excerpt, Sue (or In a Season of Crime)
by David Bowie

Bowie left us an amazing parting shot with his 25th and final album, Blackstar. The cut featured here is a free jazz/jazz-rock fusion work which sounds off-kilter or out of sync, the lyric melody not tracking with rhythm – until one looks at the lyrics as a story of confusion told at the same time as a driving lyric-less and inevitable story beats on at the same time.

Seems like an unintended metaphor for our general election politics.

Back to School, Fool

Guess who's back in town? A bunch of Congressional lame ducks back from vacation – I mean – work in their districts where they glad-handed at county fairs between bites of deep-fried Twinkies and kissing babies for campaign photo ops.

Get back to work and produce funding for Zika research AND birth control, damn it. Your continued intransigence is costing lives – short, ugly, painful, deformed lives on which you are pitiless and merciless, you fundamentalist let-them-eat-cake hacks. It's only a matter of time before somebody in your district ends up Zika-infected and pregnant after vacation trip to someplace warm like Miami – or mosquito-bitten during during their day job like lawn care or construction or mail delivery. Researchers are working incredibly hard with the limited funding they've had; there's only so much they can do with inadequate funding. And birth control MUST be available to all who need

it. Planned Parenthood can and does hand out condoms, you pathetic slack-handed weasels. Fund them.

STG if I was the president, I'd look at any way possible to trim funding to unusual projects in states with GOP senators and then declare an emergency, pull that trimmed funding to pay for subsidized birth control in the same damned states. With researchers now having found Zika infection may spread by bodily fluids like semen, vaginal fluid, saliva, and tears while documented cases mount, there's ample grounds to write an executive order during a lame duck session.

Big Oil = Big Bully

- A temporary restraining order has been granted for a portion of the North Dakota Access Pipeline under construction (Reuters) – The TR0 halted construction between Highway 1806 and 20 miles to the east of Lake Oahe. Construction to the west of Highway 1806 may continue.
- Though Army Corps of Engineers doesn't oppose TR0, it thinks the Sioux will lose their case (NPR) – The Standing Rock Sioux Tribe filed suit earlier this summer with the U.S. District court for District of Columbia because the Army Corps violated numerous laws when it authorized the construction and operation

of the NoDAPL. Had the Army Corp completed appropriate assessments required by the National Historic Preservation Act, National Environmental Policy Act, and the Clean Water Act, the pipeline's construction would likely have been rerouted or its authorization denied.

- Enbridge doubled down on the North Dakota Access Pipeline (Bloomberg) – Same company responsible for the biggest domestic oil spill ever has now killed plans for the Sandpiper pipeline which was to run through Minnesota down to Wisconsin; they blame the collapse of oil pricing and the increased expense and timing due to state regulations. This Canadian company has instead chosen to rely on the NoDAPL from the Bakken shale oil field through the Dakotas to Iowa.
- Guard dogs and pepper spray used against protesters on Saturday (NPR) – We've seen this same kind of violence against peaceful protesters before, not unlike practices by extractive businesses mining in countries like

Canada, Bolivia, Peru, Philippines, South Africa, and more. Absolutely unacceptable against unarmed persons particularly when children are present.

- Bulldozers ripped through Sioux graves and religious markers (Chicago Tribune) – Why did Army Corp of Engineers sign off on this? Why was this excavation allowed to happen without an assessment as requested by
- 150 tribes have now expressed solidarity with Standing Rock Sioux (White Wolf Pack) – Members from 60 or more Native American tribes have gathered to protest against the NoDAPL with the Standing Sioux – the largest gathering of tribes in over 100 years and the first time since 1875 that all the Lakota tribes have gathered at Cannonball River, ND.
- Excavation and attacks on protesters continued despite UN statement that the NoDAPL project violated U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (WaPo) – What. The. Hell? Did the pipeline company Energy Transfer, its partners and

financiers think rushing the start of construction over a sovereign nation's graves would make this rights' violation go away?

The NoDAPL project is bad all around. There's no good reason for it to proceed.

– The economics of oil supply and demand do not support it; the cost to proceed is simply not supportable.

– The environmental cost of this project and the oil it is intended to carry are untenable; investment of resources private and public should go toward non-fossil fuels.

– The project violates the rights of Native Americans in numerous ways and no good faith effort has been made to address them during planning, let alone now as construction begins. The current and future damage to the Sioux only exacerbates hundreds of years of abuses against their sovereign nation.

– The companies investing in this project including Enbridge cannot assure the safe operation of this pipeline given the history of pipeline leaks across this country. In Enbridge's case, this foreign-owned corporation has already proven unreliable and opaque in pipeline operations.

– NoDAPL should not proceed for the same reasons Keystone XL pipeline did not proceed: it is not in our country's best interest.

I don't know how anyone can look at this bulldozing of land containing buried Native Americans and not see it as a direct, deliberate effort to erase their existence. This is accursed behavior which in no way addresses the needs for alternative energy outlined in the Defense Department's Quadrennial Review or our nation's need to secure its people by reducing carbon dioxide output.

Odd Lots

- Disposal wells in Oklahoma including Osage Nation shut down after earthquake (Tulsa World) – Yet another case where extractive fossil fuel business on Native American tribal lands has been highly problematic. 17 wells were shut down by the EPA after Oklahoma's M5.6 induced earthquake this weekend; these wells are in addition to 37 other disposal wells shut down this weekend near the quake's epicenter. Haven't seen yet whether another earthquake of this magnitude could set off an overdue 500-year magnitude earthquake along Missouri's New Madrid fault.
- U.S. district judge denies federal plan to open 1 million acres of central CA public lands for fracking and drilling (IndyBay.org) – Bureau of Land Management didn't do its homework on environmental risks from fracking, focusing too heavily on drilling instead. Sounds a lot like Army Corp of Engineers' slap-dash disregard for externalities when it analyzed the NoDAPL,

doesn't it?

- OK's earthquake insurance market already under review (Tulsa World) – Insurers have only paid out on 20 percent of earthquake-related claims since 2010; the market has also undergone consolidation and 300-percent rate increases. No word yet on how much damage this weekend's M5.6 quake or subsequent aftershocks have caused. Hope the public lights a fire under Oklahoma Insurance Commissioner John Doak about his review of the market. It's grossly unfair the public must bear the cost of risk created by extractive industries as it is.

Longread: Lawsuit against DMCA Section 1201

Johns Hopkins University professor and cryptographer Matthew Green filed suit against the federal government in late July to strike down Section 1201 of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act. The current law prevents security researchers from adequately investigating products. Worthwhile read – this has huge repercussions on our safety and security given how much of the technology around us is copyrighted but leaky as hell and prone to hacking.

Hasta pasta!