

Hello Indivisible supporters.

Here we are again with our weekly news update. We know that you are busy people, and you probably do have a lot of news to sift through, online, on social media, on news feeds. But we will bring you a weekly update of news we curate from major news sources that may be of interest to you. We may even be able to introduce you to some new news sources you will enjoy exploring.

So read these on your devices, or print them out for your morning coffee reading this weekend. (We do not expect you will read these all at once: this is slow news, not Facebook news. So explore, linger, and share with friends—we mean share the links with actual, physical, real friends!)

- It is tempting this week to begin with a very amusing article from *The New York Times* whose title tells it all: "**Mike Huckabee Says Trump Is Like Churchill**. Historians Disagree." Right. [https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/26/us/politics/mike-huckabee-trump-churchill.html?\\_r=0](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/26/us/politics/mike-huckabee-trump-churchill.html?_r=0) [emphasis added].
- And for further amusement, you may have heard that **Sen. Orrin Hatch thanked *The Salt Lake Tribune*** for naming him, sarcastically, "Utahan of the Year." They had suggested he resign. "It would be good for Utah if Hatch, having finally caught the Great White Whale of tax reform, were to call it a career. If he doesn't, the voters should end it for him." Hatch apparently does not get out and read much: he was flattered and grateful. Right. <http://www.sltrib.com/opinion/editorial/2017/12/25/tribune-editorial-why-orrin-hatch-is-utahn-of-the-year/>. And *The New York Times'* report: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/26/us/politics/orrin-hatch-salt-lake-tribune.html?ribbon-ad-idx=9&rref=politics&module=Ribbon&version=context&region=Header&action=click&contentCollection=Politics&pgtype=article>. Good to know our Senators stay on top of the home-state news.
- This morning's *New York Times* contains an **interview with Donald Trump**, conducted impromptu at his West Palm golf club. Trump, surprisingly (or perhaps knowing his audience), said "that he believes Robert S. Mueller III, the special counsel in the Russia investigation, will treat him fairly, contradicting some members of his party who have waged a weekslong campaign to try to discredit Mr. Mueller and the continuing

inquiry.” [https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/28/us/politics/trump-interview-mueller-russia-china-north-korea.html?\\_r=0](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/28/us/politics/trump-interview-mueller-russia-china-north-korea.html?_r=0).

- The **tax bill** may turn out **not to be as unpopular with middle-class Americans** as we Democrats think. This is because Americans who believed it would not benefit them at all, and resented its giveaways to the rich, may be placated when they find that they do get some money in their pockets. This is dangerous for Democratic messaging on many levels, since the bill also 1) does benefit the rich much more; 2) makes its corporate cuts permanent; 4) attacks the ACA; and 3) will cut social programs and put pressure on local governments needing to raise local real estate taxes. *These subtleties may be missed by voters.* So some Democrats are backtracking on the idea of simply repealing the bill, choosing to acknowledge its benefits. This too may be a risky strategy, since it could dilute the message about the bill’s fundamental unfairness. This issue is well-reported-on in an article in *The Washington Post* on Dec. 26th, “Democrats build case against tax bill but don’t call for repeal.” Among these Democrats is Bernie Sanders, incidentally, who has taken a nuanced position. One Democrat who urged that people be cautious in just looking at a few dollars in tax cuts, compared to increased costs for tuition and healthcare, was Sen. Joe Manchin of W. VA, whose response may be helpful for Democrats to understand. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/powerpost/wp/2017/12/26/democrats-build-case-against-tax-bill-but-dont-call-for-repeal/?hpid=hp\\_hp-more-top-stories\\_tax-bill-240am%3Ahomepage%2Fstory&utm\\_term=.dc4e1e72b39a](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/powerpost/wp/2017/12/26/democrats-build-case-against-tax-bill-but-dont-call-for-repeal/?hpid=hp_hp-more-top-stories_tax-bill-240am%3Ahomepage%2Fstory&utm_term=.dc4e1e72b39a).

And an article in *Politico* should alarm Democrats and those fighting to educate the voting public on the bill’s massive attack on social programs and its transformation of the American social contract with our government. “**Republicans plan mega marketing push** to sell unpopular tax plan,” is *Politico*’s headline on Dec. 21. This is a mass media campaign funded largely by the Koch brothers “to sell the GOP’s tax cut law, hoping the American electorate can learn to love the party’s signature — but massively unpopular — legislative achievement.” **Politico quotes national Indivisible co-director Ezra Levin**, who says in response, “I think they are going to spend millions of dollars trying to put lipstick on this pig. But unfortunately there’s nothing they can do to change it from being a pig.”

All the same, the above is important information for Democrats, especially candidates, strategizing to attack the tax bill. The Fox / Koch machine has

a way of changing pigs into princesses with the lipstick of disinformation.

- **Politico also gives the IL 6th district race national notice**, reporting on a number of such Democratic challenges to sitting suburban Republicans around the country. In a Dec. 25th article, the news website reports that "GOP Rep. Peter Roskam won reelection handily in 2016, but his Chicagoland district saw a big shift, with President Donald Trump losing it by 7 points after Mitt Romney carried the seat by 8 points in 2012.... That's a big warning sign for Roskam and other Republicans in [big city] suburbs. Democrats have to wade through a crowded primary before they face Roskam." <https://www.politico.com/story/2017/12/25/house-races-2018-midterms-republicans-democrats-316207?cid=apn>.

A similar story ran in *The New York Times* on Dec. 24, reporting on **suburban challenges to sitting Republicans**, and here **focusing on another Illinois race**, the very conservative 16th district, "Four Democrats — a farmer, a soccer coach, an immigration lawyer and a health care consultant — are on the primary ballot in Illinois' 16th District, a C-shaped district outside Chicago running from Wisconsin to the Indiana border. The Republican incumbent, Representative **Adam Kinzinger**, ran unopposed in 2016, when President Trump won the district by 17 points. Mr. Kinzinger is not high on anyone's endangered list. But Democrats are clamoring to enter the ring." [https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/24/us/democrats-house-control-2018-midterms.html?\\_r=1](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/24/us/democrats-house-control-2018-midterms.html?_r=1).

- Two opinion pieces in our national newspapers, *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* reach almost identical **conclusions about the 2017 Year of Trump**. In *The Times* for Dec. 25, Paul Krugman writes that "America Is Not Yet Lost." He admits the bleakness of our political landscape: "Many of us came into 2017 expecting the worst. And in many ways, the worst is what we got. Donald Trump has been every bit as horrible as one might have expected; he continues, day after day, to prove himself utterly unfit for office, morally and intellectually. And the Republican Party — including so-called moderates — turns out, if anything, to be even worse than one might have expected. At this point it's evidently composed entirely of cynical apparatchiks, willing to sell out every principle — and every shred of their own dignity — as long as their donors get big tax cuts." And yet, he concludes, "...I'm ending this year with a feeling of hope, because tens of millions of Americans have risen to the occasion. The U.S. may yet become another Turkey or Hungary — a state

that preserves the forms of democracy but has become an authoritarian regime in practice. But it won't happen as easily or as quickly as many of us had feared....What we've seen... is **the emergence of a highly energized resistance.**" <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/25/opinion/america-is-not-yet-lost.html> [emphasis added].

And in *The Washington Post*, Eugene Robinson titles his essay, "**Trump's first year was even worse than feared.**" [emphasis added] After a smart discussion of Trump's dictatorial leanings and racism, his war on truth and attraction to military control of government functions, Robinson, like Krugman, wants to "end on a more positive note. The day after Trump's inauguration, a much larger crowd descended on Washington for the Women's March, an immense show of resistance. That passion might eventually have faded away, but all evidence suggests it has not. If anything, it seems to have intensified." He also sees some hope in the Democratic wins in Alabama and Virginia. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/womens-march-on-washington-a-sea-of-pink-hatted-protesters-vow-to-resist-donald-trump/2017/01/21/ae4def62-dfdf-11e6-acdf-14da832ae861\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.aa1c700e8812](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/womens-march-on-washington-a-sea-of-pink-hatted-protesters-vow-to-resist-donald-trump/2017/01/21/ae4def62-dfdf-11e6-acdf-14da832ae861_story.html?utm_term=.aa1c700e8812).

- At the same time, we are warned by our Canadian friends at *The Globe and Mail* (Toronto) not to become complacent. "So sorry. Trump's not dead yet," warns columnist Margaret Wente. "**Is this the beginning of the end for Donald Trump?** Everybody's hoping so – especially the journalistic class," she says. "That's why they're so giddy over the defeat of Roy Moore, the Alabama swamp creature with the well-documented taste for teenage girls. This is not just a victory for simple human decency. It's also [the journalists believe] a taste of greater victories to come. 'As goes Moore, so goes Trumpism,' Ross Douthat's New York Times [column](#) predicted wishfully..." But Wente points out (as others have suggested) that the Moore win is no indicator of much, given how preposterously flawed he was. And hopes for the Russian investigation to deliver a final blow may be misplaced as well: "Now that special counsel Robert Mueller has indicted Mr. Trump's former national security adviser Michael Flynn, it's only a matter of time [some believe] before the canaries begin to sing. Unfortunately, no normal person can possibly keep track of who is being investigated by whom, and for what. So far none of it seems to amount to much. ... In any event, the idea that Mr. Trump could be impeached is just a fantasy. It would require evidence of criminal wrongdoing so strong that his own base would abandon him and his own

party would vote against him. **Dream on, kids. Mr. Trump's Republican support is still running at 82 per cent.**" [emphasis added] And of course, she points out, the economy is running full steam in the US, with the market up and unemployment down. Wente notes, archly, that what will more likely bring Trump down "will come from his own incompetence in office, combined with an appetite for Big Macs that's downright life-threatening." See if you agree with Wente, and even if you do not, it is good to be wary of overconfidence, given how most pundits and people expected the election itself to go last year. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/so-sorry-trumps-not-dead-yet/article37344673/>

- *On the other hand*, Wente's cynicism may be premature. *The Washington Post* reported on Thursday that the White House is planning to attack Trump's "wonderful man" **Michael Flynn** as a liar. Could this be because he has already blown the whistle on people close to Trump, or to Trump himself? He must have given the prosecutors a lot to work with: they have, for his considerable crimes, recommended only "zero to six months" jail time. Read the story here: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-legal-team-readies-attack-on-flynn-s-credibility/2017/12/27/bc601324-ea78-11e7-b698-91d4e35920a3\\_story.html?tid=a\\_inl&utm\\_term=.40c17ece76bb](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-legal-team-readies-attack-on-flynn-s-credibility/2017/12/27/bc601324-ea78-11e7-b698-91d4e35920a3_story.html?tid=a_inl&utm_term=.40c17ece76bb).
- *Did he say it or didn't he? Did Trump, in a fit of rage, actually say*, in front of his national security team and as reported by six people who were either witnesses or briefed on the meeting, that **15,000 Haitian refugees "all have AIDS"**? "Forty thousand had come from Nigeria, Mr. Trump added. Once they had seen the United States, they would **never 'go back to their huts'** in Africa, recalled the two officials." So reported *The New York Times* in a much-shared and much-discussed inside story of how **Trump's rage at immigration** has led to shouting matches and recriminations as he tries to force the bureaucracy to stop immigration as much as possible and to deport immigrants in massive numbers. "Tempers flared and Mr. Kelly asked that the room be cleared of staff members. But even after the door to the Oval Office was closed, aides could still hear the president berating his most senior advisers." The more shocking aspects off the story are denied by the White House as lies. The extraordinary Dec. 13 exposé will be of interest to all who are concerned with immigration policy and how it is currently developing. Please share it with friends who have an interest in this issue: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/23/us/>

[politics/trump-immigration.html? r=1.](#)

- Finally, Britain's *The Guardian* has been doing **long-form exploration of poverty and homelessness in America**. On Dec. 20 the paper released an investigative report unlike any you will read in the US press. "Cities have been **offering homeless people free bus tickets to relocate elsewhere** for at least three decades. In recent years, homeless relocation programs have become more common, sprouting up in new cities across the country and costing the public millions of dollars. But until now there has never been a systematic, nationwide assessment of the consequences. Where are these people being moved to? What impact are these programs having on the cities that send and the cities that receive them? And what happens to these homeless people after they reach their destination? In an 18-month investigation, *The Guardian* has conducted the first detailed analysis of America's homeless relocation programs, compiling a database of around 34,240 journeys and analyzing their effect on cities and people." [emphasis added] Their "Outside in America Team" records harrowing tales of homeless people being given bus or even plane tickets to get out of town or even the country and relocate. But they end up traveling thousands of miles, at public expense, and never receive any medical attention or help getting housing. *The Guardian* essay is extensively documented with maps and charts as well as with personal horror stories. This is a piece to read over time and to share with your friends. Few Americans are aware of the shuttling of the homeless from one city to another, as they become, in effect, refugees in their own country. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/ng-interactive/2017/dec/20/bussed-out-america-moves-homeless-people-country-study>.

*The Guardian* says of its series that "**Outside in America** is a year-long series on homelessness in the western US. The project focuses on people on the frontline of a devastating crisis and enables readers to take action to help solve the problem." For a **full list of *The Guardian's* reports**, some on issues rarely covered in the US press, see the home page: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/series/outside-in-america> Again, a series of vital interest to anyone personally or professionally involved in studying the problem of homelessness in America.

On Dec. 23, **PBS Newshour picked up the *Guardian* story for broadcast**. You can read the transcript of their summary of *The Guardian's* research here, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/is-relocating-homeless->

[people-a-life-line-or-broken-system#audio](#). To their credit, *PBS Newshour* has been doing extensive reporting of this issue, and an internet search will disclose the range of their reporting.

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- *The Daily Herald* for Dec. 12 reported on the **debate that evening among the Democratic candidates** for 6th District at Glenbard North High School. "Seven Democratic candidates vying for the chance to run against incumbent Republican Peter Roskam in the 6th U.S. Congressional District met for a wide-ranging and fast-paced forum this week in front of a crowd of roughly 800 in Carol Stream," the newspaper reports. The article features very brief descriptions of the candidates and their chief issues: <http://www.dailyherald.com/news/20171215/seven-democrats-want-shot-at-unseating-roskam>.
- *The Herald* also reports on a **surprising anti-NRA vote by Peter Roskam** (who, see above, is facing a tough reelection bid). The bill in question was the "Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act, which makes it easier for gun owners to legally carry concealed weapons across state lines, even if one state has more stringent requirements." This frightening bill did pass the House. But Roskam voted against it; Randy Hultgren (R-IL 14th) voted for it. The newspaper editorializes in favor of Roskam here: <http://www.dailyherald.com/discuss/20171213/editorial-roskam-gets-gun-vote-right-hultgren-doesnt>

Best wishes, and Peace,

The Indivisible DuPage Research Team

***"Rise like lions after slumber  
In unvanquishable number—  
Shake your chains to earth like dew  
Which in sleep had fallen on you—  
Ye are many—they are few."***

—From "The Mask of Anarchy. Written on the Occasion of the [army] Massacre at Manchester [1819]", By British Romantic Poet Percy Shelley  
*If you think education is expensive, try ignorance.*