

THREE THINGS: SO MANY QUESTIONS, SEPTEMBER EDITION

It's been a little busy in my neck of the woods, trying to tackle a long accumulation of honey-dos. But questions piled up, needing answers, so much so that I had to take time out to put bits and pixels to digital paper. Let's begin, shall we?

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PUERTO RICO POST-MARIA

Where the hell is the USNS Comfort, dispatched in 2010 to help after Haiti's earthquake, and why isn't it docked in San Juan, Puerto Rico, right the fuck now?

Why did we send 24,000 military personnel to help Japan after the 2011 earthquake but can't muster them for a U.S. territory with a former navy facility and an active facility at Fort Garrison in San Juan?

Is Trump deliberately ignoring Hillary Clinton's plea to send the USNS Comfort to PR because – well, it's Hillary? (Yeah. Check that link. Even Fox News noted Hillary's request.)

Has Trump deliberately ignored Puerto Rico's urgent plight out of personal pique over the bankruptcy and losses from a Trump-branded, Trump-managed golf course located in Rio Grande, PR? He was trying to prop it up on Twitter back in 2013.



Trump Int'l Puerto Rico spreads luxury residences, a world class golf resort & beach club across 1,000 acres bit.ly/ZXL71D

2:34 PM - 2 May 2013

Are Trump's tweets complaining about Puerto Rico's debt yet more projection, since the failed golf course was built with government-

issued bonds?

Why did the Senate approve as FEMA director – who only left to tour the island FIVE GODDAMNED DAYS AFTER MARIA MADE LANDFALL – the man who was the Hurricane Program Manager for FEMA under the Bush administration during Hurricane Katrina?

This, from The New York Times:

The head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Brock Long, has received widespread praise for his handling of the federal response to Hurricane Harvey, the first major natural disaster faced by the Trump administration.

Somebody get me a concrete citation of a real accomplishment attached to some of this “widespread praise” for anything besides being “a calming presence in press briefings.” Has the bar slipped this low that calmly stringing together cogent sentences is worthy of accolades? Can the NYT stop fluffing Trump and his band of co-conspirators?

Because right now American citizens are suffering and likely dying as a result of this administration’s gross ineptitude and negligence, if not outright malignance.

Now Trump says he’s going to Puerto Rico next Tuesday. That’s TWO WEEKS after the storm. Can’t disrupt his golf game over last or the next weekend, don’t you know. What I particularly despise about Trump’s response to this crisis is that he makes this guy’s fly-by two days after Katrina look so much better.

Call your members of Congress and demand action. Yeah, that’s not a question. Suck it up; you’ve got electricity, communications, and access to clean water if you’re reading this. Millions of your fellow Americans in Puerto Rico don’t. Let’s fix this.

GRAHAM-CASSIDY-HELLER-JOHNSON NOT-A-HEALTH-CARE BILL

Have you called your senator and asked them to vote NO on the debacle Sen. Bill Cassidy can't explain and over which Sen. Lindsey Graham is ruining any cred as a rational human being, while disabled health care activists recover from being hauled away by capitol police yesterday before the Senate Finance Committee's hearing on the bill?

Have you documented and shared publicly your senators' position on Graham-Cassidy, especially if they are up for re-election in 2018?

The number is (202) 224-3121 if you don't have it memorized already.

Need a script to make it easier? Here you go.

As wretchedly bad as this obscene joke of a bill is, I can't help wonder if GOP members of Congress and their staff are gaming this. Have they been working on something even worse than previous attempts at ACA repeal just to game the stock market and make a few bucks on the backs of worried citizens?



[graphic: Health Insurance stock chart, via Google Finance]

For grins you should look at Aetna's chart for last Friday and note the jump it took when Sen. McCain expressed his reluctance to support Graham-Cassidy. Price jumped about the same time capitol police arrived to arrest protesters. Easy money, that, conveniently ahead of the market's

close.

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IRAN ~AND~ PUERTO RICO

What question do these two disparate places prompt?

First, Trump tweeted about an Iranian missile launch as if it had *~just~* happened, within 24 hours of a reconstituted travel in which Iran is listed. But the missile launch *~didn't~* just happen; it took place more than six months ago but was mentioned only this week in Iranian news.

Second, Trump took his fucking sweet time ensuring FEMA went to Puerto Rico; Hurricane Maria made landfall on September 20th, visible to anyone who watched weather networks, NOAA, and NASA reporting.

Is Trump ignoring any and all U.S. intelligence and government experts on matters foreign and domestic, relying instead on some other criteria for responding to events, including cable TV? Should we believe for a second he's simply and accidentally flooding his source of information?

In the case of Iran's missile program, it looks more like he deliberately used stale news to defend a new travel ban while making propagandistic false statements to the public. The Supreme Court canceled hearing the travel ban after the travel ban was rejiggered – does this suggest his manipulation of perception worked, not only on the public but on the Supreme Court?

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One more time: call your Senators to ask NO on Graham-Cassidy and get their position on the record. Call your members of Congress to ask for urgent response and funding for aid to Puerto Rico. The number is (202) 224-3121. Put it on speed dial.

Viajar bien, mis amigos y amigas.