

opinion/editorial

Nixon's attempted comeback audacious



It might be a good time to bring out the old posters of Richard Nixon that say "Would you buy a used car from this man?"

This former president displays an unbelievable amount of audacity and brashness. He is the first president in the history of the United States who resigned from his office to escape impeachment.

Then Nixon was pardoned by Gerald Ford, his vice president who inherited the presidency.

Now reports are being released about his retreat at San Clemente where he talked about his comeback. That's right, his comeback.

After the Watergate incident, the rigged election, the break-in at Democratic headquarters, the cover-up, the erasing of the tape which left an 18 minute gap, the illegal spending in his 1972 campaign, Nixon has the gall to even talk about coming back to public life.

Many of his associates are still in jail. Others are living in seclusion. And yet, Nixon is trying to weasele his way back to public life which is demonstrated by his latest venture, hosting a \$250-a-head fund raiser at San Clemente for county Republicans running for office in Orange County, Calif.

On a political scale, county offices are rather small, but if this is a stepping stone to bigger and better things, the country ought to be on the look out.

Yet, it must be an amusing sight to observe Nixon at a fundraiser talking to conservatives, where participants who actually shelled out \$250 to attend, swallow what he said.

Another thing that makes Nixon's attempt at a comeback more disgusting is that during the whole Watergate ordeal he never expressed any remorse.

Nixon damaged his party's reputa-

tion and if he associates himself with any national republican figure Nixon can only harm his efforts.

The former President was caught flimflamming the country and damaging individual's respect for government and politicians. He stood by and let his associates go down for the count, and what may be considered more damaging is the possibility that the American people will again embrace Nixon.

Polls have shown that people are more willing to forgive Nixon now.

Some may consider it acceptable to forgive the former president. But to grant him access back to political life after not spending one day behind bars for his crimes is unthinkable, even though it is unlikely Nixon will make a grandiose comeback to political life.

One can hardly call living in seclusion in his lush San Clemente estate, while suffering disgrace, a punishment.

Final-offer arbitration, not strikes, cure to disputes

The strike, as a means of settling labor disputes, is a cure that isn't very much better than the disease.

Maybe that's the voice of panic. I don't think so, but heaven knows there is enough to be panicked about. You've seen the news stories about the strikers: police and firemen in Memphis; Philidelphia sanitation, health care, clerical and recreation workers; New Orleans garbage collectors; Louisville firefighters; Cleveland police.

The public interest involves much more than just inconvenience. Striking law officers constitute a threat to the public safety. Garbage rotting in the streets threatens health.

little, because it knows it will have to bargain up from the original offer. Labor demands too much, because it knows it will have to bargain down. Theoretically, the adversary nature of the bargaining process will work to produce a reasonable compromise. Usually it does.

But often it doesn't, and when it doesn't, final-offer arbitration seems to me a reasonable recourse. I find it particularly appealing in the case of public employment. But it makes just as much sense in private disputes, including the one that has shut down New York City's three major newspapers.

So why isn't it being used more widely?

The short answer is that neither labor nor management finds it attractive. Even mediators don't care much for it, although many of their reasons strike me as either misleading or obscure.

Appeals to scholars

L. Lawrence Schultz, director of arbitration for the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, once told me that final-offer arbitration has its chief appeal among "commentators, scholars and intellectuals," a formulation that makes clear his own coolness towards the idea.

One reason for his lack of enthusiasm, he said, is that the routine recourse to final-offer arbitration would lead both

sides to sit back and wait. "Certainly, neither side would be inclined to make major concessions," he said.

Which strikes me as just the reverse of what would probably happen. I cannot imagine either labor or management failing to make the concessions it believed necessary to make its proposal the more reasonable of the two under consideration.

But when the basic collective bargaining process has broken down and the choice is to knuckle under or strike, final-offer arbitration makes sense—a lot more sense than the specter of firefighters watching a town burn down. (Copyright), 1978, The Washington Post Company.

william raspberry

Just last week, there were news reports of striking firefighters standing and watching while fire engulfed a block-long section of downtown Anderson, Ind.

A better way

In some of these instances, strikes are illegal. But legal or not, they are dangerous and, finally, unacceptable. There has to be another way, a better way.

In fact, there is another, better way, though both management and labor have been reluctant to employ it. I refer to the procedure known as final-offer arbitration.

The procedure would not affect the ordinary collective bargaining process. Workers and their employers would continue to try to hammer out agreements between them, with the normal give and take such bargaining entails. Final-offer arbitration would come into play only in those cases where the bargaining process breaks down, where there is an impasse.

Neutral board

At that point instead of strikes, lock-outs and the rest—the union and management would each submit their final proposals to an independent, neutral board which would then choose one of the proposals as the final contract.

The board would have no authority to modify or combine the features of the two proposals. One of them would be the final settlement, period.

The attractiveness of the idea for me is the way it encourages brother parties to get down to brass tacks. You don't leave in outlandish demands or ridiculously small wage offers if to do so would increase the chances of the other side's proposal becoming the final contract. Each side would be motivated to get rid of its own absurdities.

Reasonable compromise

As it works now, absurdity is an integral part of the process. Management offers too



Humanity behind bars of chimp's world

"... cancel my subscription to the resurrection...."

Jim Morrison

What happens when nightmares become reality?

The line between the two can sometimes seem very fine indeed. Two months ago, the following news item sent chills up and down my spine.

michael zangari

As you have probably heard, scientists are teaching chimpanzees to communicate with humans using sign language. In the process they have discovered that the chimps think of themselves as human.

For instance, when sorting photographs of people and chimps into two piles, the chimps will generally put a photograph of their natural parents into the animal pile while putting a photograph of themselves into the human pile.

In another instance, Washoe, the most famous of these chimps, when introduced to other chimps for the first time referred to them disdainfully as "black cats" and "bugs", and had trouble adjusting.

The saddest case in the release, and the one that has me off on this current rampage, involves a chimp by the name of Allee.

Allee was raised by humans, but was forced to give them up when he moved to the Oklahoma Research Center. When introduced to the other chimps, he seemed cheerful enough, playing with them like dogs and cats.

The scientists there say that eventually "something clicked" with Allee. He began screaming, quit using sign language, and sank into a severe depression.

He realized he was a chimpanzee.

Having been on this campus for four years, I am not unfamiliar with the Twilight Zone, but this seemed to hit on a fundamental fear of mine.

More terrifying than waking up each semester and discovering that I am a student, is the fear that some day—maybe 10 years from now—I am going to wake up and discover that I am all the people I've

never wanted to be.

There are certainly worse fates than living out the plot of a bad B movie—marrying the queen of my nocturnal emissions, being content in a sedate job, and having 2.3 children to mess up my illusion of control, but at the moment I can't think of many.

Everybody has dreams, crystal ships that carry everything they hope to be. There are few things as fragile. It is so easy to be trapped into a job because it is easy to fall into, or worse yet, because it is easy to be comfortable. And no, it's not a crime to be comfortable, but in many cases it is expensive, and the dreams are the first thing to be sacrificed. They don't go dramatically when you are sedate, they just slip quietly away.

There must be some natural process that cushions that blow. If you are never fully aware of the loss, I imagine it can even provide some sad smiles in your memory.

It is ultimately facing the dream's malfunction that provides today's nightmare. It's that sinking fear that someday, something will click. I'll begin screaming silently, quit communicating and sink into a severe depression.

And I'll realize I'm all too human.