

OBSERVATION POINT

Nixon Has Lost Confidence Of The People

By Philip H. Power
Publisher

I heard three remarks last week that indicate just how much trouble our nation is in these days:

"Trust what the President says? Haw, haw! That's a good one!" Source: A distinguished member of a local Rotary Club, with a group of his fellow Rotarians grumbling assent.

"The government of the United States has suffered a nervous breakdown." Source: Max Frankel, about the most thoughtful and balanced member of the national staff of the New York Times, at a speech before a bunch of New York fat cats. Frankel got it hand.

"It is a symptom of what's happening to our country that it could even be suggested the United States would alert its forces for domestic reasons." Source: Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, as he responded last week to suggestions that the President over-reacted for political reasons in calling a world wide U.S. forces alert over the mideast situation.

What is troubling about these three quotes is they

come from responsible people who up to now could be expected to defend President Nixon.

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WHAT SEEMS to have been the straw that broke the camel's back was President Nixon's actions of 11 days ago, when he fired Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox. He thereby violated his own pledge that Cox would have a free hand in his investigations and raised to a sharp new pitch the suspicion that he was trying to cover up wrong doing by his administration and, perhaps, by himself.

The net effect was to give the public the impression the president's claims that he was just as interested as anyone else in rooting out fairly and thoroughly the Watergate horrors were nothing more than politically motivated lies.

What's dangerous about that is once people get the idea the President might be lying in this particular case, they then lose regarding other cases the fair-minded trust and respect for the office they ought to have.

Did the big grain sale to the Russians benefit a

few insiders while raising the cost of bread and beef to the American housewife? The administration denied it.

Did the settlement of anti-trust charges against ITT result from a campaign contribution? The administration denied it.

Did the dairy industry get a big price increase in milk through another big campaign donation? The administration denied it.

Was the financing of the President's two houses entirely appropriate? The administration says so.

And so forth.

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THE WHOLE POINT is that since Mr. Nixon fired Cox, the entire question of trust and confidence in the President has become the key issue in an unexpectedly direct way.

All of the public opinion polls now show that a majority of the American people no longer trust what President Nixon says. That isn't just polls; when the mideast crisis erupted, most people thought the President was over-emphasizing the national security problem to cloak his own political difficulties.

That, I believe, will turn out to be an incorrect conclusion, when all the evidence is in.

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BUT IT DOES go to show that when the people lose trust in a leader, he quite simply cannot govern.

It all goes back to that old proposition that a government, to survive and succeed, must have the confidence and trust of the governed that it is a government of decency and integrity.

I think the President has lost the confidence and trust of the people.

I think that, having lost it, he cannot get it back. I think that, in the present situation, Mr. Nixon simply cannot govern effectively.

While I have the most serious reservations about whether impeachment proceedings against the President are appropriate or possible, I believe the President would do himself and his country the greatest possible service by resigning after a new vice president is confirmed.

And I believe that if the President does not resign, he should be impeached, because he has lost that without which no government can exist: The confidence of the people.

Sample Was Excellent; Seek More Bike Days

Two strong impressions emerge from the mail our Readers' Forum has been receiving on the subject of bike days on the Hines Parkway Drive:

"More bike days in '74 would help not only cyclists but also hikers and horse-back riders."

"Cyclists themselves have some excellent suggestions for making what was a successful day Oct. 21 even better next year."

The mail began to pour in when my esteemed mythical colleague, Lem Messer, suggested in Friday's edition that persons who want more car days in the 26-mile county park write to the Readers' Forum and the Wayne County Road Commission.

A Franklin High School student wrote that "horse-back riders also enjoyed the opportunity" to enjoy the park without danger, adding:

"I think we should plan a bike trail through Hines Drive...A large number of accidents between cars and bikes occur each year. Chances are these occurrences will be less in number."

"Livonia, along with many other cities, is in need of some means of bike transportation trails. This would be an ideal place."

Jane Kubarth, of Livonia, wrote to the Road Commission and called bike day "the best thing that's ever happened in the suburbs. Why should all of us have to drive all the way to Mackinac Island for some good, safe bike riding?"

Mrs. Kubarth makes a convincing case for more than one bike day in '74: "If there were 10,000 people this year, there will be 25,000 next year...I personally felt the drive was just about filled to capacity. If there are four

days set aside next year, the parkway should not become overcrowded as all people will probably not go every time.

But the lady doesn't stop there:

"If it were open more often, no one would have to rely so heavily on the weather. As it was this year, the weather was perfect. But what if it had rained?"

"I would like to see one safety rule pointed out: 'No stopping on the pavement.' On my 18-mile ride, I found this happening only a few times, but it did block traffic and it did cause a problem."

"There's support for opening the parkway all the way to Northville. The prettiest part of the park begins at Ann Arbor Trail and leads out to Northville," said one rider.

The idea is good, but there may be a problem because of M275 freeway construction in the Haggerty Road corridor. Nevertheless, it never hurts to keep prodding the Road Commission.

Mrs. Vera Selke of Westland appreciated the day and added: "I love to ride my bike and I ride nearly every day through the cube, but what a headache having to dodge all the cars."

Mike Saum of Garden City says of the suggestion for four bike days: "Why settle for four? Let's have more, more, more."

We agree with him and State Rep. John Markes, who made the proposal, that one bike day a month would be even more desirable. But bike days cost money and

upset parks department and police routines, so it's wise to ask for four for '74. Maybe in '75 there could be more.

A no-cars day every Sunday? That may be asking too much. Many family reunions and company picnics are scheduled on Sundays, and those folks need cars.

The letters you send to Observer Newspapers will be forwarded to the Wayne County Road Commission.

Rep. Markes will personally make the request for four bike days in '74, but his job will be a lot easier if you cyclists, hikers and horse-back riders write letters. The pen is mightier than the jaw-bone.

Gov. William Milliken's proposed finance reform program is a welcome relief in the post-Watergate atmosphere in which all, or most, elected officials are suspected of skull-duggery unless proven otherwise.

With the almost daily exposure of illegal campaign donations and spending, the public is ready to push for a real limit on how campaigns are financed and candidates elected.

If Milliken's program is adopted, which we doubt, it would bring a substantial improvement to the method of financing local elections.

The Legislature will have to approve any proposals and incumbents are traditionally reluctant to give up any advantages they have to potential challengers in future elections.

But the governor has several sound ideas that deserve public support.

Some important points that stand out for sheer logic are the listing of donations and the donors BEFORE the elections.

At present, only a post-election report is required by candidates and the voters are deprived of important information before they

make decisions at the ballot box.

Finding out about campaign donations after the election is obviously too late to do any good.

When the candidate, who has had the benefit of financial help from real estate and development people who have proposals before the city council or township board, comes up for re-election in two or four years, the previous campaign expense report is usually long forgotten.

Milliken's proposal to have buyers of tickets at candidates' fund-raising parties is a good idea in a time when only the parties' total income is legally required.

Realtors and developers usually buy a pocketful of tickets to their favorite candidates' fund-raiser, knowing their names won't appear on any legally required campaign expense report.

There are other practical suggestions Milliken has proposed to open up campaign funding disclosures and close the loopholes which are now large enough to dump a number of political futures.

Candidates shouldn't cry about potential sources of campaign funds drying up.

Candidates will be forced to get their money from a lot of little people instead of the past practice of getting a lot from a few large people.

This doesn't mean political candidates will have to be a combination Eagle Scout-Mr. Clean-and-the-neighborhood pastor.

It will mean the community will have more honest elections and probably elected officials who will have no financial ties to persons doing business with the municipal government.



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Hockey Crowd Gets Bum Deal At Arena

EDITOR:

As an interested spectator in hockey, I am appalled at the manner in which the Plymouth arena is run, particularly on Junior B hockey nights when an admission is charged.

The past two Saturday night concessions closed well before the end of the game. On Oct. 13, Plymouth played Fraser, easily an hour's drive for the fans who attended. I find it unreasonable that the concessions would close at 9:45, making it impossible for the paying spectators as well as the boys coming off the ice at 10:30 or later to buy food or drink.

The only way they could purchase anything would be to take their chance on the machines that sometimes work and sometimes don't. They are certainly cutting out a fair amount of revenue by closing up the snack bar, turning out lights, and cleaning even before the games end.

The above was irritating to many of us, but the fact that the doors to the lobby were bolted, thereby cutting off the restroom facilities to the public, I find almost unbelievable.

Apparently no one at the rink had the authority to open the doors and allow the Fraser fans to use the restrooms before their long trip home.

Junior B night is a fairly inexpensive evening's entertainment, but instead of promoting it with the lovely arena and all of its facilities, management is treating fans as unwanted guests who have stayed too long.

NAME WITHHELD

UPON REQUEST

SR Committee Praises Voters

EDITOR:

To the residents of South Redford:

In a special millage election held on Sept. 8, the citizens of South Redford approved a three mill increase for school operating expenses. Had the voters not turned out in record numbers to approve this increase, the school district would have experienced major cutbacks in its overall educational program.

Over 300 Redford residents, including parents, students, senior citizens, business men, and members of the clergy, worked actively to make the needs of the schools known to the public in order to secure passage of the millage proposition.

This group of your fellow citizens, which comprised the millage campaign committee identified as Citizens for Students and Schools, extends its thanks to all who gave their support at the polls.

The 4,094 citizens who recognized that a tax increase was necessary in order to maintain the quality of our schools merit the gratitude of

READERS' FORUM

Please type (or write clearly) and limit letters to 300 words.

- Letters must be signed, with the writer's address. Names will be withheld only at the writer's request and for good cause.
- The editor reserves the right to reject unsuitable letters.

Class Saving Soup Labels

EDITOR:

My school is collecting Campbell's soup labels and we need your help. We are saving them for a Kodak slide projector and a large screen filmstrip viewer. We need 10,750 labels and we need them by Dec. 8. We only have about 500 children so you can see our problem.

Please save your labels and send them to Gallimore School, 8375 Sheldon Road, Plymouth 48170. Thank you for your help.

ROB McDONALD
Mrs. Scheffman's
4th Grade Class

Bike Day, Police Fine

EDITOR:

Our family was very impressed with the bicycle ride on the Hines Parkway. We feel this should be a monthly program.

The main reason for my note is to express our appreciation to the Livonia police department for providing individualized assistance for each and every bicycle rider crossing Schoolcraft at Stark Road. This service truly impressed me and my family.

W. HABFPAP
Farmington

Leonard Has Heart Of Gold

EDITOR:

On behalf of the Westland Jaycees, I would like to express my deep appreciation for the excellent coverage your paper gave our Junior Miss Pageant.

I would like to commend a gentleman on your staff - Leonard Poger. I don't really know where to begin to thank him. In this last year, Leonard and I have worked very closely together with everything that pertained to Junior Miss.

Leonard is a very warm person with a heart of gold. The Westland Observer should be proud to have such a fine gentleman on their staff. Thank you again.

TONY ROSATI,
Chairman, Westland
Junior Miss Pageant

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BY REQUEST
Livonia

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