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QUOTE FOR THE DAY

“A man who is his own lawyer has a fool for a client.” Abraham Lincoln, and on his birthday no less. Plus, a silent tear, as the San Francisco Board of Education removes his name from all schools named in his honor.

GOOD ADVICE RE LAWYERING-EXCEPT

Except, where did Mr. Trump find this guy Bruce Castor for a defense attorney who clearly established a category inferior to acting as one’s own lawyer? How disjointed and inarticulate this man was in his first day of presentations to the Senate jury in the Trump impeachment case.

The testimony and film footage provided by the impeachment managers was truly gripping, with outstanding presentations by Jamie Raskin, Madeleine Dean and Stacey Plaskett. None of the other speeches or media coverage I have reviewed came close to giving the feeling of sheer terror that must have been felt by members of Congress and the Senate.

It cannot be denied that President Trump contributed to that day of crisis, but so did those militant organizations which preplanned much of their activities, along with militaristic goading by right wing radio hosts ever since the election.

From what we are seeing and hearing the 45 Republican Senators who appear unwilling to convict Mr. Trump are of that position because they believe it is unconstitutional to put a civilian on trial in the Senate.

Numerous authorities on the Constitution have argued both sides of this matter and one really has to wonder when, or if, the question will be addressed by the Supreme Court.

David Schoen, Mr. Trump's other defense lawyer states, "An impeachment trial of a private citizen (Trump) held before the Senate would be nothing more or less than the trial of a private citizen by a legislative body. An impeachment trial by the Senate of a private citizen violates Article 1, Section 9 of the United States Constitution,"

Much is made by those saying this is a legitimate trial by referring to an impeachment trial in 1876 of the then recently resigned Secretary of War, William Belknap, as precedent for why today's impeachment trial is justified.

Eugene Kontorovich is a constitutional law expert at George Mason University, He points out with regard to the Belknap trial that, "questions about the constitutionality (of the trial) helped lead the Senate to acquit him."

So, instead of there having been a clear cut case in 1876, the Senate had the same problem then, as now. Mr. Kontorovich continues, "Congress did not even pursue the reviled Nixon when he entered private life, because it

was understood he could no longer be impeached.”

The other lynch pin being used by those who contend this is a legal trial is to prevent any president from engaging in unlawful behavior at the end of his time in office. Those on the other side of this debate contend that is why we have the criminal code of justice.

Supporting that, in one of Mr. Castor’s few cogent comments he said, “If Trump actually played a part in the Capitol riot, after he’s out of office, you go and arrest him.”

I think it’s highly likely that once the trial is over and Trump is acquitted once again, that some members of Congress will request the Department of Justice to institute criminal proceedings against him.

To many, since the Democrats know they can’t convict Mr. Trump, and therefore block him from any future Federal office, it appears the aim is to so tarnish his reputation that the public will long remember this time, having

the same effect with regard to ending his political career.

Sad times for our country; honest and unsettled debate on both sides of the Constitutional issue, and a confused citizenry. Unfortunately, Hillary Clinton just can't stay out of it. Adding fuel to the fire, on Feb. 11th she declared, "If the Senate fails to convict Trump, it is because they are his co-conspirators." I'll let the reader add your own coda.

CRYSTAL BALL FOR MR. TRUMP POST TRIAL

First off, a Quinnipiac poll last week found that 50% of Americans wanted to see Mr. Trump convicted and 45% said he shouldn't be.

Polls show that a big majority of the 74.2 million voters who backed him last year would do so again, with a YouGov survey showing that 80% of Republicans would definitely or probably support him for president in 2024.

There has been some talk of Trump starting a third party, which has historically been a losing proposition. In any event, a new CBS poll

asked Republicans if they would join a third party. 33% said yes and an additional 37% said maybe. Just 30% said no. Doesn't look like "unity" is coming to your home- town soon.

SPECIAL PLACE IN THE PANTHEON OF IDIOTS

Reserved for one Virginia Heffernan whose next door neighbors are Trump supporters. After a big snow storm, without even being asked, they plowed out Ms. Heffernan's drive way as a favor. That prompted Ms. Heffernan to write a column for the Los Angeles Times, "What can you do about Trumpites next door. When someone helps you when you are down, or snowed in, it's almost impossible to regard them as a blight on the world. But, what do you do with one kind act after years of support for a man who showed near-murderous contempt toward most Americans." She goes on to compare her neighbors to Hezbollah, Louis Farrakhan and the Nazis - another big win for unity and common decency.

IRAN - DÉJÀ VU ALL OVER AGAIN

With one big difference: As with so many other issues, domestic and foreign, President Biden has decided to do a 180 degree change with the policy of the Trump administration with regard to Iran's nuclear program and our position is that we now want back in the nuclear freeze program that Mr. Trump had rejected. Just a couple of problems here: first, Iran demands that we lift all sanctions, then they will be willing to sit down and talk about it. Most importantly, and ominously, Iran's intelligence minister has raised the possibility that Iran would be forced to seek nuclear weapons, something they have always said they would never do. Even though the U.S. and its allies never believed that statement, Iran always maintained that public posture.

Intelligence agencies now report that Iran has enough enriched uranium to build three bombs and could possibly do so within two years. Sounds like it's time for Mr. Netanyahu to contact the Mossad and reactivate the centrifuge destruction squad.

THANK YOU DEAR READERS

On March 19, 2020 The Hermit Herald was born just as the country was starting to close down with the pandemic. A small group of readers has grown to well over 100 in the past eleven months. Thank you all for your support, comments and critiques. A trip down memory lane with some notes from issue 1:

“Finding myself intellectually challenged during this period of monastic existence, I have decided to place on the shoulders of my friends the angst of my ennui. Hence the first issue of the Hermit Herald, which may, or may never hit the newsstands again. Within this erudite publication, the reader will discover some true and helpful tidbits, some thoughtful musings and a good sprinkling of innocuous drivel. Proceed at your own peril. Out of the knowledge that necessity is the father of invention, the Hermit Herald was born.”

HAPPY VALENTINE’S DAY TO ALL

It’s still too soon to ask a Democrat to hug a Republican or vice versa, but how about, “Hi”, or, “How ya doing?” Or, maybe, “Thanks for plowing my drive.”

Your faithful scribe, PB