

## *All the Withdrawals*

**P**resident Johnson's withdrawal from the presidential race is the last of a series of withdrawals that caught the mass media totally and completely by surprise: Governor [George] Romney's sudden pullout while campaigning in New Hampshire, and Governor [Nelson] Rockefeller's decision to withdraw from the race after all his friends and associates were assured that he would enter. In every case, the withdrawer proclaimed the reason to be his desire to "unify" the party and/or the country.

All this gives me an idea. If these withdrawals are so beneficial for the party and for the country, why shouldn't more politicians and potential candidates follow the noble example set by these idealistic men? Why shouldn't *everyone* withdraw: Nixon, [Robert F.] Kennedy, McCarthy, Humphrey, or whoever? As each politico withdraws, we can all strew their paths with flowers and hail their nobility and self-sacrifice. It would then be a shame and a disgrace for anyone to run for the presidential office; and *anyone* who dared to do so would be a kind of moral leper in the community. Of course, the result of this onrush of morality in the land would be that there would be no one available to run for the presidency, and I'm afraid that the result would be that the august office of the presidency would be declared vacant.

With the presidency vacant for four years, there would be no one to make war, no one to submit a federal budget, no one to urge Congress

to pass new legislation, no one to execute the laws, no one to push us all around. Perhaps after the initial shock, we would all find ourselves immeasurably freer and happier than we were before.

Then a clamor would well up to extend the benefits of this moratorium on public office even further, and all sorts of bureaucrats and politicians, high, low, and middling, would resign or refuse to run for office. Government offices would become vacant across the length and breadth of the land, and joy would reign unconfined. For anyone to run or to accept any public office would be considered a moral and an aesthetic disgrace, to be shunned by one and all.

One office I would like to see mass resignations from, pronto, is membership on one's friendly local draft board. The draft board members perform their noble service unpaid; yet, just as charity is supposed to be silent, so these worthies get upset if their names become known to the public that suffers its sons torn away at their beck and call. Let us find out who our friendly local draft board members are, and let us not forget them when we cast our moral opprobrium at the politicians and bureaucrats.