Opinion
News



by Michael Sean Winters

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Best Headline of 2020 contest has been decided, even though it is only May. The winner, yesterday's Dana Milbank column in The Washington Post: "If Trump likes hydroxychloroquine, he'll love camel urine." Every time I think of it, I get the giggles.

Truly sad news from the Washington Business Journal: Kramerbooks & Afterwards Cafe is leaving the Dupont Circle location where it opened 44 years ago. As regular readers may know, I was the general manager there for 17 years, starting when I was in grad school and staying on after I realized the academy was not for me. I left in 2003, mindful that while I might be up to the task of moving kegs at 3 a.m. through my 40s, I wouldn't be up for it in my 50s, and I went to work on Gen. Wesley Clark's presidential campaign. I can't say I enjoyed every minute I worked there, but I would bet I enjoyed close to 95% of the minutes I worked there, and it was a 60-hour-per-week job. Well, enough for that trip down memory lane. I shall miss going there when I visit D.C. and especially the crab cakes! I shall cherish all the memories it furnished.

In The New Yorker, David Remnick on how President Donald Trump mimics the "genius for creating confusion, creating turmoil in the hearts and minds of the country" that attorney Joseph Nye Welch attributed to Sen. Joseph McCarthy during

the Army-McCarthy hearings in 1954. Remnick warns the president's campaign will be "even more shameless than originally conceived" as he contends with his dismal performance confronting the pandemic. I fear he is correct.

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At Politico, Alex Thompson on the degree to which progressives are disheartened at this stage in the political calendar. Uniting the party remains Job No. 1 for Joe Biden if he is to have any chance at beating Trump.

In The Washington Post, Jonathan Capehart does not see eye-to-eye with me about the veep selection. But he overpromises when he writes:

> Before I list some popular choices, let me obliterate an argument that has cropped up in response to my first post. When folks say that whomever Biden selects should be the most qualified or that "identity politics only gets you so far," they should be aware of how that hits the African American ear.

He then touts Stacey Abrams' qualifications for the job. First of all, I suspect Capehart is engaging in magical thinking if he thinks there is only one "African American ear" and that he can discern how things strike it. Secondly, it takes more than this to "obliterate" an argument: Abrams is impressive but her claim to fame, important though it is, is extending the franchise. She has demonstrated no experience in foreign policy or military affairs or macroeconomic policy. Contra Capehart's insidious accusation, you don't have to be missing Jim Crow to question the thinness of her credentials.

[Michael Sean Winters covers the nexus of religion and politics for NCR.]

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