

The Streaking Of the President



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WHEN THE new college fad of streaking first erupted, many Americans smiled tolerantly. "Isn't it nice," they said, "that kids have returned to true educational activities like panty raids and goldfish swallowing."

That was before students at the University of Pennsylvania formed the Streak for Impeachment Committee. "We feel larger mass demonstrations of streaking in the United States," said militant student leader Paul Matthias, "can accomplish much in the political arena."

He was, of course, absolutely right.

At first, the White House paid little heed. "If eight congressional committees, six grand juries and two special prosecutors can't expose the President," one aide said, "it's obvious these kids will only expose themselves."

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BUT THE White House had badly misjudged the mood of the country. After a year of headlines about somebody or other seeking tapes and documents from somebody or other, the people had grown confused and frustrated with the whole impeachment process. But streaking was understandable at a glance.

Moreover, it was a tactic with much in its favor: It was healthy, it attracted media coverage, anyone could do it, and it used no gasoline.

True, there were abuses. "Come on, honey," an unscrupulous young man might wheedle his date. "don't you want to impeach the President?"

But there were benefits, too, as in the case of Kenneth E. (name withheld), who had been booked 17 times for indecent exposure. "Just think, I used to be a dirty old man," he said proudly. "Now I'm a political activist."

The new political weapon naturally divided the country. Those who had desperately sought impeachment through marches and rallies, turned to streaking with fervor. On the other hand, elderly ladies from Dubuque deplored such "shock tactics." But as they of course blamed the President for this deplorable moral decline, the clamor for impeachment grew.

A straw in the wind was the manner in which congressional candidate Peter Pettigrew streaked into office. His candor, analysts agreed, was his appeal. "As you can see," he would shout modestly as he streaked through a shopping mall, "I have nothing to hide."

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BOWING to pressure, the House prepared to vote on impeachment. Just at that historic moment, 21-year-old Candice Kupcake heroically streaked through the hallowed hall.

"Wow!" cried the Speaker unthinkingly. "Wasn't she a pippin?" The chorus of "ayes" was unanimous and the President stood impeached.

As his trial opened in the Senate, the President once again faced that same old agonizing decision: should he uphold the prestige of his office or should he make a full disclosure?

"I have at last decided," he told his aides grimly, "in favor of full disclosure."

And, with that, he whipped off his necktie and streaked through the Senate!

The never-before-seen sight of Mr. Nixon without his necktie stunned the Senators. They voted to a man to acquit him forthwith.

"After all," said one dazedly, "from Mr. Nixon nobody could expect a more complete disclosure than that."