

Ronnie Keeps The Faith and His Job, Too

By Art Buchwald

The big question everyone in Washington is asking this week is, "If for some reason President Nixon has to leave office, will Ron Ziegler be able to get his job back at Disneyland?"

The consensus among most Ziegler-watchers is that he will. One watcher who asked not to be mentioned by name because he still has relatives in Orange County, Calif., told me, "I've been watching Ziegler now for five years, and as far as I'm concerned he never left Disneyland. Ron is a born believer in fantasy and he knows how to treat everyone like children. The very virtues that made him one of the best guides at Disneyland are now paying off for him as spokesman for the President of the United States."

"But wouldn't the Disney people be hesitant about rehiring someone who worked in the White House?"

The Ziegler-watcher shook his head. "Ron was never involved with Watergate. He's clean as a hound's tooth. You want to know why?"

"Sure," I said.

"Because they didn't trust him. They were afraid if they told him anything, he'd spill it. Everyone else in the White House apparently knew what the hell was going on except Ziegler. They treated him like a dum-dum and now they're all going to jail, and Ron has the last laugh."

"I've never seen Ron laugh," I said.

"It was just a figure of speech," my friend replied.

"Do you realize that next to Al Haig, the President depends more on Ziegler than any other person in his Administration?"

"Why is that?"

"Because Ron still believes everything the President tells him,"

"You mean Ziegler's not putting us on when he says now that we have all the facts the only conclusion we can arrive at is that the President knew nothing about the cover-up?"

"In his heart he really believes it."

"How could he?" I asked.

"Because he worked at Disneyland. Anyone who believes in Mickey Mouse, Snow White and Donald Duck is going to believe Mr. Nixon's story. You can say what you want to about Ron, but he does have a lot of faith."

"Does he believe in the Easter Bunny?"

"I don't think the Easter Bunny was a Walt Disney creation," he replied.

"You know, sometimes when I watch Ziegler on television, I get the feeling he isn't telling the whole truth . . . that he's making things sound better than they really are," I said.

"And where do you think he learned that?" my friend asked.

"Disneyland?"

"Where else? Disney created a world of make-believe and illusion. When Ron moved to Washington he just took that world with him."

"You seem to have a grudging admiration for Ziegler," I said.

"I do. When Ron first started in his job he didn't know very much, and he said whatever they told him to. But now he's adding his own fantasies to Watergate and they are as good as any being put out in this country."

"So you think that no matter what happens to President Nixon, Ziegler won't have to worry about a job?"

"I know it," my friend replied.

"How can you be so sure?"

"No one knows this, but Ziegler never quit his job at Disneyland. He just took a leave of absence."