

The Latest Performance Of Mr. Agnew

by George Will

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The country is in desperate need of evidence that someone in the administration is capable of real indignation about the sustained criminality that the President likes to call a "deplorable incident." But Mr. Agnew, whose reservoirs of indignation have not previously seemed finite, has responded to Watergate by - surprise! - conducting seminars on the press.

Until now, Mr. Agnew's performance as Vice President, while fascinating, has not really been important to the nation. But as Mr. Nixon shuffles somnambulistically toward the collapse of his administration, Mr. Agnew's performance becomes significant.

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... But if Mr. Nixon should leave office prematurely, the country will need a president, not a symbol. Unfortunately Mr. Agnew, who is a crackerjack cultural critic, has not manifested much interest in government.

I think I know pretty well where he stands on corporal punishment and advocacy journalism (and, for that matter, on corporal punishment for advocacy journalists). But I haven't a glimmer of an idea what, if anything, Mr. Agnew thinks about monetary theory or the doctrine of finite deterrence.

With Mr. Nixon's presidency stumbling toward collapse, the unknowns about Mr. Agnew are alarming. They probably would be even more alarming if Mr. Nixon were not so well known.
