

We'll get through it; but glad when it's over

Both of these things can be said, at the same time, about most current news, not only the November election, but also the hurricane season, and the baseball season. The best feature, at this writing, about all three is that they will end, unlike the tragic wars in the Middle East, which do threaten to linger and the edginess in the economy.

There has seldom been a campaign which, on the home stretch, has surfaced so much basic change, in contrast with the long months of repetitious rhetoric. But the fragility of the presidency has been brought into even starker relief than usual by the age and history of the Republican candidate. He and his running mate are certainly pro-life, though not quite of one mind; but it is not at all clear what the party thinks about it as a group, and which way the unborn would be taken if that famous skipped heartbeat were to occur.

We may see a chain of events "before it's over" unlike any previous in our history, at least in public view. One may be the wedding of the vice-presidential nominee's pregnant daughter, who has made the wholly admirable decision to have the baby. How far this family solidarity may go to assuage the anti-firearms elements in society (Governor Palin being a longtime NRA member), time will tell. There are various other factors in that family which may or may not be relevant to her suitability for the presidency; but there is little chance that the public will be informed in time.

One can be a lifelong member of a party and hardly recognize much of its present character; but that does not make it easy or pleasant to switch. I suggest that huge elements of the public will wrestle with this dilemma in the coming weeks.

It is frivolous; I admit, to bracket the other two "seasons," hurricane and baseball. The first is tragic for thousands, and calls for our generosity and service. All the same, we'll be glad when it's over. Yet, on a given evening, the collapse of the local bullpen can seem, on the tube, sad as well. Not in the same order of magnitude (life

and death); but unless something is done, local loyalists are in for a bad month. When all three are taken in tandem, such as the storms' effect on the convention, we'll be glad when it's over.

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