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# Rev. Al's Bozo Play

WRITE this column as a lifelong New Yorker. Our city is in mortal peril. The very idea of density, long our chief attraction, is under assault, made dangerous by terrorism and unnecessary by the Internet. In Thursday's runoff primary, a victory by Fernando Ferrer would further endanger New York City's future.

Ferrer used to be a moderate Democrat aiming his candidacy at the Hispanic, black and white Catholic communities. He tried to take moderate positions on issues and reflect the values of outer borough voters. But he's a changed man these days.

Ferrer has been reincarnated as a militant ally of Rev. Al Sharpton, determined to move New York decisively to the left. His call for "decentralization" of the City's financial district was questionable before Sept. 11, but it is a total disaster after it. As New York City struggles to remain the financial capital of the world and desperately tries to persuade its tax-paying tenants to remain in newly vulnerable skyscrapers in lower Manhattan, all we need is a mayor who is committed to reinforcing their centrifugal tendencies.

Ferrer is now the wholly owned subsidiary of



DICK MORRIS

Sharpton. He would be guided by this outrageous caricature of a civil rights leader in his policies on issues of police conduct, public safety and crime control. De facto, Al Sharpton would be Ferrer's police commissioner.



Ferrer and Sharpton: Militant allies

We do not need to ratify Sharpton's outlandish accusations against New York's Finest by letting him get even close to control of the NYPD.

When Sharpton said that even Bozo could have done what Guiliani has in rescuing New York, Ferrer embraced the sentiment, differing only slightly with his mentor's choice of words. When Sharpton says "jump," Ferrer asks "how high?"

Let's remember the Sharpton of Tawana Brawley who joined in an elaborate hoax that made New

York state's top officials look like idiots as they chased phantom allegations of rape while he attacked them daily.

Ferrer's determination to raise taxes would be another nail in the coffin of New York's business district. His taxes, which would undoubtedly fall most heavily on those businesses that already have one foot out the door, will drive New York further down.

Ferrer had hoped to win the primary, propelled by Sharpton's endorsement, by getting more than 40 percent of the vote. He came within four points of his goal. Now, he seeks to take advantage of the enthusiasm of Sharpton's supporters to win in a runoff where turnout threatens to be

lower.

Because, in Yeats' words, the "best lack all conviction, while the worst are full of passionate intensity," he may pull it off. If those voters who do not want the financial district "decentralized" or the police curbed and do not think Guiliani is a "Bozo" stay home, we could wake up with a city even further from recovery, attacked by a rump group of self-interested demagogues.

Who'd be the Bozos then?

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