



Mother & Daughter

The Letters of Eleanor & Anna Roosevelt

EDITED BY BERNARD ASBELL

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Acknowledgment and thanks are expressed to the following persons for permitting quotation of letters used in this book: Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr., literary executor of the Estate of Anna Eleanor Roosevelt, for the letters of Eleanor Roosevelt; James A. Halstead, M.D., for the letters and other papers of Anna Roosevelt Halstead, and for his own letters and other papers; Elliott Roosevelt, for two of his own letters; John Boettiger, for making available numerous documents including the letters of his father, John Boettiger.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Roosevelt, Eleanor, 1884-1962.

Mother and daughter.

Edited by Bernard Asbell.

1. Roosevelt, Eleanor, 1884-1962. 2. Roosevelt, Anna, 1906-1975. 3. Presidents—United States—Wives—Correspondence. 4. Presidents—United States—Children—Correspondence. I. Roosevelt, Anna, 1906-1975.

II. Asbell, Bernard. III. Title.

E807.1.R418 1982 973.917'092'2 [B] 81-22051

ISBN 0-698-11161-3

AACR2

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

"... I wrote [John] ... to wish him and his bride happiness, ..."

November 4, 1949

Mummy, darling:

I am starting this out dictating to Peggy ... I owe you so many letters it's terrible! ...

I hope my long letter about doctors made it clear that the one doctor who has given me the jim-jams is Dr. Urabec, because of his insistence a couple of weeks ago that I immediately enter a TB sanitarium and start pneumo-thorax treatments, to be followed up with further surgery if he thought it necessary.

Recent developments are that an upper right molar has begun to bother me and must definitely be filled before I go away—particularly as I did not have a dentist in Phoenix whom I had any great confidence in. I am not strong enough to have much work done at one sitting, so it takes longer than usual. I went down to the dentist yesterday to have this looked at however. Therefore, I have been checking into a doctor whose name is F. M. Pottenger. All my checks have been to the good. Strange to say he is a good friend of Helen Gahagan Douglas' family physician here. So even though Helen doesn't know it, as she is away on a speaking tour until this weekend, I will probably get my first introduction to Pottenger through Dr. Gabriel Segall.

This means that I will very frankly tell Pottenger why I did not have confidence in Urabec, and ask him to tell me very frankly if he feels I should stay here until there is a definite diagnosis, or until the [lung] cavity closes, or if he feels I would heal faster by going to a place like Phoenix.

This also means that I will have to call Eagan and tell what I tried to avoid telling him—namely, that I lost confidence in Urabec, even though I realize that this is purely personal on my part, and doesn't mean that he is not a very fine physician.

The wonderful bed jacket made from Granny's material arrived safely. I have been wearing three bed jackets which Katy made me when Johnny was born. They are still in fairly good condition, but the new one is a most welcome change. The funny part is that it has been so blooming hot here this past week that any bed jacket is too hot! Many, many thanks. ...

I still have not heard anything further from John B. than the one letter I told you about which was dated Oct. 20, and which told me he had written to Johnny about his marriage plans. The letter to Johnny has still not arrived. Yes, on the 6th I wrote him that I was ill. And when I wrote him a couple days ago to wish him and his bride happiness, I told him that I had a cavity in my right lung.

I, too, felt very sad about Ed Stettinius' death. As you said in your column, it's sometimes very difficult to understand the reasons behind the work of the "Grim Reaper".

[from Anna's carbon copy of her secretary's typing; no signature]

July 29, 1945—March 6, 1952 | 267

"... Just a place to sleep & see people ..."

29 Washington Square West
New York 11, N.Y.
Nov. 10th [1949]

Anna darling,

Your letter of the 4th was enlightening but not conclusive!

... David Gurewitsch was very happy that his letter was helpful. He has a keen understanding of all you are going through & a great impatience with doctors etiquette! ...

I have had no word from John Boettiger so I imagine he has decided that there will be less contact in the future. ...

I am trying to rent this apartment furnished & take rooms with Elliott in a hotel. It is an experiment till next September but I think may be better & a little cheaper. I don't need a home & more to care for here. Just a place to sleep & see people & an office & no servant problems seems a wise arrangement, if we find we like it! If I don't I'll move back here in Sept. ...

Would you like some books or have you all you want?

Much, much love darling
Mother

"... I am so happy ... it turns out to be desert fever ..."

29 Washington Square West
New York 11, N.Y.
Sunday night Nov. 13th [1949]

Anna darling,

I am so happy for you that it turns out to be desert fever & therefore means a quicker recovery. What a relief to everyone but above all to you for I know how you hated to be tied down & uncertain of your health. ...

Neither Tommy, Elliott or I were very favorably impressed by Mr. Donald Day. He seemed vague & I doubt if he realized what research on a book of any kind on Father would mean. I'll be interested to hear what he tells you. ...

A world of love darling,
Mother

"... I'll try to compete adequately with you! ..."

December 14, 1949

Mummy darling:

I think of you so darn much despite my very bad habits as a letter writer!
All of your wonderful packages have arrived, and so far I have refrained

from opening them and sorting them only because in this apartment I have no place to hide them from one young Johnny Boettiger. . . . Mummy, as usual, (from the number of things that have arrived) you are spoiling the living daylight out of us. You know, of course, that we love it! It does appal me a little however to think of all the trouble you have gone to and the time it must have taken you.

We three will go to [brother] Johnny's and Anne's for Christmas dinner and the rest of the day will be a very quiet one around here. But the quietness seems to be what [ten-year-old son] Johnny particularly wants as gradually it has developed that last year he felt overwhelmed by our very numbers at our Hyde Park Christmas! By the way, Johnny has improved just loads since he's been going to this school. He's nowhere near as selfish, seems far more secure about his home and me, and is ever so much more affectionate.

I'm sorry that you and Elliott and Tommy didn't like Donald Day. But of course we're such a large family that it would be impossible for all of us to feel the same about the same people. It happens that Donald Day is not a close personal friend of mine even though I do like him very much. The thing is that our contracts and conversations have been purely on the basis of history, political philosophy and world human relations—and that is the basis on which we will do the book. So we are proceeding and hope to get the manuscript completed by next July 1. I do so hope that as it proceeds you will all like it and feel that it's a worthwhile contribution.

Of all the tests that I had taken in San Francisco the last time I was there, the only one that I have heard results on was the one which was to show whether or not my lesion was a tumor. The report, thank goodness, is negative. All of the doctors, including the TB specialists, continue to feel sure that it's a pretty sure bet that I have desert or valley fever. And therefore Dr. Charles Smith is going to continue following up on me. I had word from Leo Doyle yesterday that he had phoned and said that he would like another stomach washing. And as I am to have another X-ray this coming week, I will go back there again for a day, probably next Tuesday or Wednesday. Western Airlines has a subsidiary company called Western Airlines of California. It uses DC4's, is a coach-like arrangement and costs only \$22.88 round trip.

We all felt that it was wiser if I didn't go to visit Sis until after the middle of January when I will have answers to these last guinea pig TB tests. This is of course purely an ultra-conservative preventative decision, and I'm doing it just because I don't like to take the personal responsibility of running a chance in so far as Sis and Van and Nicholas are concerned. . . .

Darling, I hated to have you bothered by that damn guy Pegler's nosiness. [Westbrook Pegler, in his column, is pressing a rumor that Lucy Mercer Rutherford was at Warm Springs on a romantic visit when the President died.] But it struck me that Madame Schoumatoff [Shoumatoff] did a very good job when interviewed. I can't imagine why Olive Clapper [widow of Washington columnist Raymond Clapper] felt it necessary to go into this subject at all in her book. I had always understood that she was a pretty nice person, but now I have changed my mind.

It's grand to hear from Tommy that you all like the apartment at the Park-Sheraton. It sounds like a wonderful idea if it saves all of you from any of the

wear and tear of housekeeping and the expense that goes with that particular part of our lives. Have you let the Washington Square apartment on a furnished or unfurnished basis. I hope the latter unless you have rented to people you know will take care of things for you. Don't forget I still don't have your private phone numbers at the Park-Sheraton.

My present schedule is that I must be in bed in a reclined position for 12 hours a day, and must make every attempt to "loungue" during the greater part of the other 12 hours. As my lesion is closed and there are no bugs running around in my system, I do not have to take any kind of medication. I'm avoiding all large gatherings, meetings or parties, like the plague, as it is impossible for me to go to one such thing and not to many others. And of course I'm forbidden any late nights, etc.

Mummy, I hate to tell you but I'm still 100% sold on trying to work out a way of making my living out here, and therefore of not moving back East. Naturally I'm not going to be pigheaded, if, after I get entirely well and have made every effort out here, I cannot find any work. But I'm sure going to make the effort! And, of course, I'm going to try to get back on the air even if it's only on a Westcoastwise basis. Besides that I may do some other writing. But none of this can be decided definitely at the moment. When I go back on the air I'll try to compete adequately with you! . . .

[typed; no signature on carbon copy]

" . . . I don't like being in competition . . . "

Val-Kill Cottage
Hyde Park
Dec. 29th, 1949

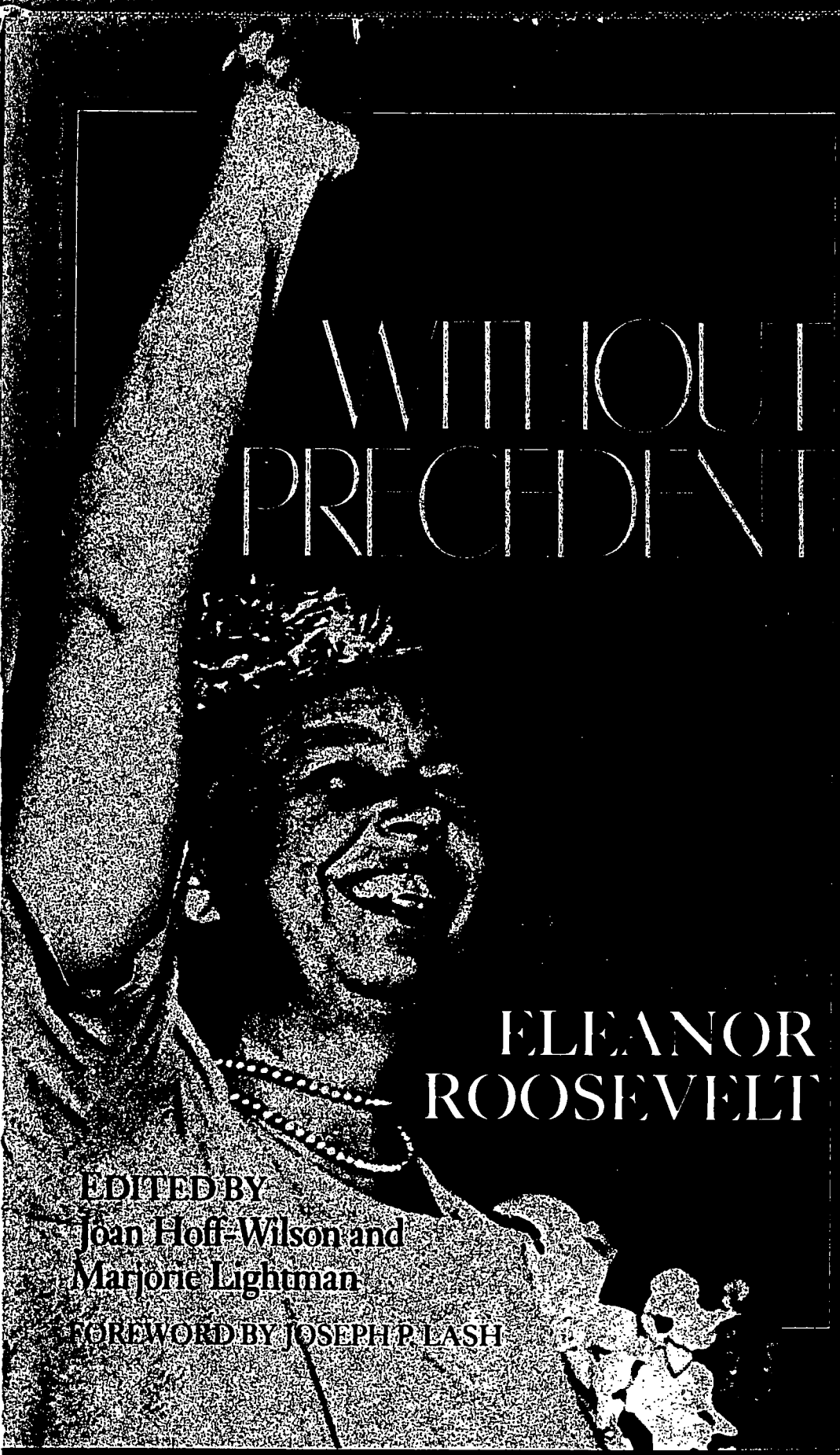
Anna darling,

The basket is lovely & the colors in the fire give me pleasure every evening. You should not have thought of this but I love it & many thanks.

I wait as anxiously as you must the result of the last tests.

As long as you want so much to stay West I hope that it will be possible for you to do so. I had hoped my radio programme could be owned by you & Elliott but if you are not here to work on it we must think of something else. I don't like being in competition & when you go on again I will try to get off as soon as possible though Elliott says I cannot run out on my contract. When Mr. Day wants to work at the library let me know as I can speak to them. It will be heavy work to get a book out so soon. . . .

A world of love,
Mother



WITHOUT PRECEDENT

ELEANOR
ROOSEVELT

EDITED BY

Joan Hoff-Wilson and
Marjorie Lightman

FOREWORD BY JOSEPH P. LASH

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Manufactured in the United States of America

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Main entry under title:

Without precedent.

(Everywoman: studies in history, literature, and culture)

Includes index.

1. Roosevelt, Eleanor, 1884-1962—Addresses, essays, lectures. 2. Presidents—United States—Wives—Biography—Addresses, essays, lectures. I. Hoff-Wilson, Joan.

II. Lightman, Marjorie. III. Series: Everywoman.

E807.1.R48W48 1984 973.917'092'4 [B] 83-49062

ISBN 0-253-19100-9

ISBN 0-253-20327-9 (pbk.)

1 2 3 4 5 88 87 86 85 84

Introduction

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in the 1920s

ER and Democracy
Era Susan W.

PART II

ER and American
Bureaucratic

ER and Black
Robert L. Zang

"Turn toward
Blanche Wiese

I know perhaps better than most people how disheartening it is to work as Mr. White has worked and stand up under defeat over and over again and pick the pieces up and start again and always hope that each defeat means some victory and a step forward. I think that takes great courage, and for that reason tonight I want to congratulate Mr. White, not on the personal courage which he showed when he was young, but on the courage which it takes to accept temporary defeats in order that you may eventually win and never to acknowledge that you really are defeated. That is a very fine kind of courage and Mr. White has it.

Because she was years ahead of most white Americans in her defense of blacks, Eleanor Roosevelt needed a reserve of that same courage she attributed to Walter White. Her commitment to civil rights opened her to public and private attacks. Segregationists accused her of undermining a southern "way of life." They often distributed pictures of Eleanor Roosevelt escorted by black males, conferring with black civil rights leaders, or otherwise socializing with Afro-Americans in ways that seemed compromising to southern traditions. (The use of photographs to discredit her brings to mind the same tactics employed by racists in the 1960s to damage the reputation of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.)

Stories in publications like the *Georgia Woman's World* augmented a host of verbal rumors about alleged improprieties on Eleanor Roosevelt's part. Widely circulated reports told of so-called Eleanor Clubs designed, it was said, to promote rebellion among black domestic workers in the South. Opponents of the New Deal such as the Liberty League, a business-financed and ideologically conservative organization, portrayed Eleanor Roosevelt's civil rights activities as a negative feature of the New Deal, and the Republican party sought in more muted terms to do the same. Nor did she escape criticism from some blacks, mostly militants suspicious of the procedural reforms that she, the NAACP, the National Urban League, and similar civil rights advocates were trying to advance. Even certain members of the New Deal administration were impatient with her. White House advisers Stephen Early and Marvin McIntyre resented her importunities in behalf of Afro-Americans; Secretary of the Army Henry L. Stimson denounced "Mrs. Roosevelt's intrusive and impulsive folly" in advocating expanded rights for blacks in the Armed Forces; and so close a friend and sympathizer as Harry Hopkins recognized the difficulties she could create within the administration:

This incident [her appeals for clemency in the case of the condemned black sharecropper Odell Waller in the summer of 1942] is typical of the things that have gone on in Washington between the President and Mrs. Roosevelt ever since 1932. She is forever finding someone underprivileged and unbefriended in whose behalf she takes up the cudgels. While she may often be wrong, as I think she was in this case, I never cease to admire her burning determination to see that justice is done, not only to individuals, but to underprivileged groups.

Walter White staunchly defended her. To those who claimed to support her objectives but not her means he pointedly asked what methods they suggested she employ:

Silence? Let us look at the things Mrs. Roosevelt has asked for the Negro. Freedom from lynching and mob terrorism, jobs, the right to participate in government on the same basis as others. I wonder if the so-called resentment against Mrs. Roosevelt is not due in large measure to the fact that being the great humanitarian she is and, also, being the wife of the President, her statements about the South cannot be brushed off lightly.

And yet, Eleanor Roosevelt's background of traditional humanitarianism as well as her role in the White House induced a cautionary stance on civil rights. She knew, as her husband's political aides often reminded her, that she spoke not only as a private citizen but for the president and the Democratic party. There were times, she admitted in *This I Remember*, when her husband's reluctance to commit himself or to take a stand on political issues "annoyed me very much." Though she ultimately deferred to his wishes, she recalled that she wanted

to get all-out support for the anti-lynching bill and the removal of the poll tax, but though Franklin was in favor of both measures, it never became "must" legislation. When I would protest, he would simply say: "First things come first, and I can't alienate certain votes I need for measures that are more important at the moment by pushing any measure that would entail a fight."

Because of her husband's political considerations and those of the Democratic party, she confessed, "I frequently was more careful than I might otherwise have been."

After the particularly brutal Claude Neal lynching at Marianna, Florida, in October 1934, Walter White wanted her to speak at a protest

lady, Roosevelt dramatized and advertised the mood of the early New Deal: frantic action, readiness to experiment, concern for the "forgotten man," and a realistic recognition of the grimness of the social problems of the depression, accompanied by a faith in combating them.

Though she initially viewed her role as that of auxiliary to her husband, Roosevelt also started to work independently for the causes she deemed important. In the beginning, she did not plan her course. She picked up new causes as they came along. "Somebody asked me to 'come and let us show you what is happening here,' and, being interested, I went. Then another invitation came, and I went. And each thing I saw proved so fascinating I found myself going more and more, farther and farther." Quickly, however, she developed the mechanisms for investigating social problems on a human level, established channels of direct communication between the general public and the White House, and developed her own role as intermediary between the New Deal and the public and between New Deal administrators and the president. She developed the power inherent in the position of first lady into a unique instrument for furthering social reform.

In sustaining this role, the first lady had several advantages. Unconstrained by any official administrative position, she could speak out more freely than could the president. She had access to New Deal agencies through their heads and administrators. From the beginning of the New Deal, administrators turned to her for help and contact with the president; gradually, she took the initiative and sent them her queries, criticisms, and advice. Because of her influence, even those who felt uneasy about her interference continued to appeal to her when they needed her support. Even her enemy and public critic, Westbrook Pegler, recognized the emergence of a reform agenda in the first lady's activities: "Mrs. Roosevelt has been too busy with such trivialities as old-age pension, a ban on child labor, and the protective health of mothers and children," he wrote in his column on April 25, 1935.

Roosevelt's support of New Deal relief and reform programs reflected her concern with the welfare of individuals, as well as with larger social problems. Her efforts to build lasting social reform elements into temporary relief measures and her campaigns for the launching of far-reaching reforms, such as social security or fair labor standards, had an important effect on the shaping of the New Deal's reform agenda that went beyond emergency measures and helped lay the foundation for the welfare state.

As first lady, her attitude toward relief agencies revealed a skillful combination of reformer and politician. On the one hand, she tried to supervise the administration of the various relief agencies and to see that they had an impact at the grass-roots level. At the same time, she tried to construct elements of permanent social reform rather than view New Deal measures strictly as temporary measures.

During the "First Hundred Days" of the New Deal, Eleanor Roosevelt began to assume new responsibilities. She was concerned that, in the rush and excitement accompanying the launching of new projects, human dignity should not be sacrificed to administrative expedience. The New Deal should not defeat its purpose by overlooking the needy groups that had been habitually ignored—single women, youth, blacks, and sharecroppers. At the same time she sought a rational administration of work relief, with a view to the needs of communities and an emphasis on productive employment rather than "busywork."

In the complex administrative machinery of government relief, Eleanor Roosevelt occupied the unique role of intermediary between the average person and the government. People in trouble, encouraged by her public invitation to write about their problems, called for help. In addition, she developed the practice of forwarding the letters requesting help to the National Democratic Committeewoman in the state from which the letter came. The committeewoman took the case to the appropriate relief agencies.

In her concern for the "forgotten" in American society, Eleanor Roosevelt went beyond her Progressive predecessors and pushed the New Deal's relief programs and reform measures to encompass the groups that had been previously left out. She focused on the establishment of relief agencies for women and youth and emphasized equal treatment for blacks. The Swain essay details how she quickly and effectively helped launch special programs for unemployed women. By December 17, 1933, about 100,000 women were among the 2,610,451 workers under the FERA and the Civil Works Administration (CWA). Thirty-five states appointed women directors to head work projects for women. At ER's insistence, Hopkins issued recommendations to include women wherever possible in the reemployment program. He suggested that they be given clerical jobs, even if this meant transferring men from such positions to other jobs. In this case and others in the 1930s, Eleanor Roosevelt's advocacy of women was motivated not as much by feminism as by her quest for social justice.

Eleanor AND Franklin

BY JOSEPH P. LASH

*The Story of Their Relationship
Based on Eleanor Roosevelt's Private Papers*



FOREWORD BY ARTHUR M. SCHLESINGER, JR.
INTRODUCTION BY FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT, JR.

36. *The Politics of Conscience*

AN ALERT PUBLISHER rushed into print a 40,000 word compilation of articles and speeches that Eleanor Roosevelt managed to put together in the course of getting settled in the White House. The book, entitled *It's Up to the Women*, had as its unifying theme the reforming role that women must assume if the nation was to come through the crisis of the Depression successfully. It chattily interlaced workaday advice on menus, household budgets, child rearing, and getting along with one's husband and children with apostolic appeals to women to lead in the movement for social justice, to join and support trade unions, to set up consumers' groups to police the NRA, and to enter politics.¹

The new order of things, Eleanor exhorted, should reflect not only "the ability and brains of our men" but also "the understanding heart of women," because especially in times of crisis women had "more strength of a certain kind than men."² "Perhaps it is better described as a certain kind of vitality which gives them a reserve which at times of absolute necessity they can call upon."³ Above all, she wanted women to take the leadership in the movement to abolish war, and hoped that the adventure of building a better world might take the place of the excitement and glamor of war. She did not expect much from the men when it came to manifesting a will to peace: "Only the women and youth of any country can initiate this change. They will have the men to help them later on in the fight, but they will meet some of the same unbelief and lethargy that they have come up against in the past."⁴

It's Up to the Women was a call to action. It also indicated that the First Lady had her own set of priorities—peace, the abolition of poverty, and a concern for youth, women's rights, and the rights of minorities generally. Mary Beard concluded her enthusiastic review of the First Lady's book with the surprised observation that "the implications of some of her economic statements reach to the borderlands of political, social and cultural change."⁵

Eleanor's role as mistress of the White House was thrust upon her by virtue of being the president's wife, yet she also actively sought to shape that role in accordance with the laws and purposes of her inner being. "I am not a philosopher," she said.⁶ Indeed, she was acutely conscious of her lack of a college education, which left her, she felt, at a disadvantage in the analysis and judgment of competing intellectual claims. Nevertheless, she did have a philosophy of living shaped by her religious upbringing and fed by a seemingly inexhaustible spring of human sympathy that turned the Golden Rule into a vital

are thousands of people in the country starving?" Before the startled official could reply, she went on, "Why not give the meat away to them?" Her strong objections to the destruction of food in the midst of hunger led to a scheme that anticipated the food-stamp plan. "Surplus farm products are being fed to the hungry instead of being destroyed because she asked a government official a question," reported Ruby Black in *Editor and Publisher* at the beginning of 1934.¹⁵ "Of course all the male officials are convinced they would have thought of it themselves," Ruth Finney later wrote in the Scripps-Howard newspapers, "but they had not done so up to the time she insisted it was the thing to do."

Eleanor's greatest hope for bold, innovative moves to bring idle men and idle resources together lay with the Civil Works Administration set up by the president in November, 1933, and charged with the task of putting four million unemployed to work. "I hope that Mr. Hopkins, in his new corporation, will do some of the things which need to be done. He is really a remarkable person and gradually things may work out."¹⁶

She approved and defended her husband's program, but there was a radical charge to her advocacy of the New Deal that was absent from his. By the end of 1933 there was some improvement in the economic situation and considerable recovery of confidence. There was "more hope in the air," Eleanor wrote her friend Florence Willert in England, "in spite of the fight we have on our hands over here just now."¹⁷ The fight was being waged by an owning class, which, its nerve restored, was beginning to resist further changes.

Eleanor devoted the opening lecture of her civics course at the New York Junior League to the need for continuing deep-rooted reform. She sought to bring home to the three hundred debutantes and society matrons who crowded the small auditorium the hunger and the cold that Lorena Hickok was reporting from the Dakotas, the desperation in Appalachia. People "simply won't live that way," she warned. She begged her listeners to make the effort to put themselves into the minds and hearts of the wretched and deprived because if they did so they would not be able to complain about higher taxes and government interference.

She told the story of a man who had gone to jail for stealing food to feed his starving family. He had been a model prisoner and was released for good behavior, yet as he left he swore to the warden he would do the same thing again if necessary. "I wouldn't blame him," Eleanor commented, and as her audience stirred uneasily she added, "You would be a poor wishy-washy sort of person if you didn't take anything you could when your family was starving."¹⁸ The protests flooded in; editorialists and correspondents were horrified that the First Lady should seem to be encouraging lawlessness and violence. "I certainly did not tell the story of the starving man's stealing to feed his family to promote or encourage lawlessness or dishonesty," she answered one such critic. "I was merely trying to bring home to my audience, which was made up of people who know little of the suffering of poverty, that people were being driven to desperate ends." Give a job to the man whose case she cited, and to others like him, she said, and they would be the "most loyal and law abiding citizens."¹⁹

"Nothing I said in my talk justifies starting a revolution by violence," she replied to another critic.

I simply pointed out the historical fact . . . that revolutions do not start until great groups of people are suffering and convinced of the hopelessness of their cause getting a fair hearing. I have always made it a point that we are going through a revolution without violence and I hope it will continue to be so, but certain changes must come and we should be willing to have them come.²⁰

She directed her appeal to women and young people particularly, because she thought they were less involved with the past than the men and, therefore, freer to consider new ideas and accept drastic change. At Mrs. Meloney's annual *New York Herald Tribune* Forum she called upon youth to become socially militant and to face the fact "that it has to change politics, it has to change business ethics, it has to change the theories of economics and above everything else, it has to change—well, its own weaknesses." Young people should not be afraid of new ideas and should stick with them "until they have decided whether there is anything in that new idea which is worth while or not."²¹

Her praise of a little book, *Prohibiting Poverty*, by Prestonia Mann Martin, the granddaughter of Horace Mann, showed her own readiness to examine the most visionary of blueprints in the search for solutions. The book was in its fourth printing when it came to her attention in the autumn of 1933. Many of its ideas echoed Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward*. At the heart of Mrs. Martin's "National Livelihood Plan" was the concept—taken over from Bellamy—of a Young Workers Corps or industrial army into which all young people of both sexes would be conscripted from the ages of eighteen through twenty-five. This Young Workers Corps—or National Service Corps, as Mrs. Martin also called it—would produce the "seven cardinal necessities" for everyone—food, clothing, shelter, transportation, etc. His eight-year service to the nation finished, the young "Commoner" would become a "Capital," free "to engage in the pursuit of wealth, fame, power, leisure. . . . He may continue to work or not, as he chooses. His basic livelihood is in any case secure." The National Livelihood Plan, summarized Mrs. Martin, "is a project whereby collectivism would be applied to the production of Necessaries while individualism would be reserved for the production and sale of Luxuries and Surpluses for profit."

It was utopian and simplistic and its implementation would have involved a fantastic degree of regimentation. "Where would I be if I listened to that?" Franklin commented dryly when Eleanor gave it to him to read. Utopias taken literally are easy to caricature, but they must be seen, and that is how Mrs. Roosevelt saw *Prohibiting Poverty*, after an impetuous endorsement that was without qualification—as a stimulant to thought and debate, not as a working blueprint. *Prohibiting Poverty* was a utopia that was drafted by a woman and, therefore, more likely to interest women, Eleanor felt. It dramatically advocated a national purpose that she favored as strongly as the Socialists did, that given America's technological progress, poverty could and should be abol-

her than by anyone else, man or woman, with whom the President was acquainted."³⁸ But beyond that, Miss Perkins exemplified the new type of public servant who was being brought to Washington by the New Deal.³⁹

When Frances Perkins says "I can't go away because under the new industrial bill [NIRA] we have a chance to achieve for the workers of this country better conditions for which I have worked all my life," she is not staying because she will gain anything materially for herself or her friends, but because she sees an opportunity for government to render a permanent service to the general happiness of the working man and woman and their families. This is what we mean as I see it by the "new deal."

If this attitude toward public service struck people as new, "the women are in part responsible for it."

Louis Howe, who shared Eleanor's view that women were in the forefront of the revolution in thinking that was back of the New Deal, believed that revolution would soon make it possible to elect a woman president. "If the women progress in their knowledge and ability to handle practical political and governmental questions with the same increasing speed as they have during the last ten years, within the next decade, not only the possibility but the advisability of electing a woman as President of the United States will become a seriously argued question," he wrote, adding that if politics continued to divide along humanitarian-conservative lines and the people decided they wanted a New Deal approach to such issues as education, recreation, and labor, "it is not without the bounds of possibility that a woman might not only be nominated but elected to that office on the grounds that they better understand such questions than the men."⁴⁰

Louis was so persuaded that the country might in the not-too-distant future say "Let's try a woman" that one day he came into Eleanor's sitting room, propped himself cross-legged on a daybed, and said, "Eleanor, if you want to be President in 1940, tell me now so I can start getting things ready."⁴¹

One politician in the family was enough, was her reply to such proposals, seriously meant or not. She did not deceive herself about the real attitude of the country, and doubted that the election of a woman was as imminent as Louis thought. "I do not think it would be impossible to find a woman who could be President, but I hope that it doesn't happen in the near future. . . . I do not think we have yet reached the point where the majority of our people would feel satisfied to follow the leadership and trust the judgment of a woman as President." Some day it might come to pass "but I hope it will not be while we speak of a 'woman's vote.' I hope it only becomes a reality when she is elected as an individual, because of her capacity and the trust which a majority of the people have in her integrity and ability as a person."⁴²

Women would have to learn that no amount of masculine chivalry was going to give them leadership if they could not actually "deliver the goods." They should leave their "womanly personalities" at home and "disabuse their male competitors of the old idea that women are only 'ladies in business.'" Women must stand or fall "on their own ability, on their own character as per-

sons. Insincerity and sham, whether in men or in women, always fail in the end in public life."

It's Up to the Women, which came out in November, 1933, was her first book, and like most first authors she soon was inquiring of her publisher, Frederick A. Stokes, how well it was going. "The book is not running away but is selling very steadily," he replied. Eleanor wanted to be successful, and she cared about her influence. Women leaders were conscious that the New Deal meant that more women were involved in government, that more strongholds of masculine privilege were being infiltrated, and that Eleanor Roosevelt was at the hub of this movement. "For some time I have had a collection of statesmen hanging upon my wall," wrote Carrie Chapman Catt, "but under the new administration, I have been obliged to start a new collection and that is one of stateswomen. Now it is ready and you are the very center of it all."⁴³

Fundamentally Eleanor was neither stateswoman, politician, nor feminist. She was a woman with a deep sense of spiritual mission. Like Saint Theresa, she not only "had a powerful intellect of the practical order" but was a woman of extravagant tenderness and piety. There was always some prayer in her purse to recall her to her Christian vocation. Christ's story was a drama that re-enacted itself repeatedly in her thoughts and feelings. Amid the worldliness, the pomp, and the power of Washington she managed to hold vivid and intimate communion with Christ with a child's innocence and simplicity. Christ's life in this world, she wrote in a Christmas message,

lasted only a short thirty-three years. This life began in a manger surrounded by poverty and the only thing apparently which the Christ Child was given was an abundance of love. All his life was spent in want as far as material things were concerned. And, yet from that life there has sprung the Christian religion and what we know as Christian civilization. . . .

Christ died a horrible death, probably at the time it was looked upon as a death of shame. He was buried by those who loved him in a borrowed tomb for he had never acquired any property of his own and yet from that death of shame and that borrowed tomb, has come to us all the teaching which has made progress possible in the love of human beings, one for another.

What a tolerant person Christ was! He rarely condemned any one. Only when the money changers desecrated his Temple did he allow himself to drive them out.

To those who were weak, however, and to those who had aspirations or a desire to do better, he was the understanding and forgiving master.

Her greatest admiration, she wrote in *It's Up to the Women*, went to the women in all ages "whose hearts were somehow so touched by the misery of human beings that they wanted to give their lives in some way to alleviate it." Preaching and exhortation were of little value unless followed up by living example. "The reason that Christ was such a potent preacher and teacher was because He lived what He preached," and missionaries—social as well as religious—"who want to accomplish the double task not only of alleviating human suffering but of giving faith to the people with whom they come in contact, must show by their own way of living what are the fruits of their faith."⁴⁴ She did so every hour of every day. She had disciplined herself never to evade an issue or

his sons; his destination was Campobello, where Eleanor would report to him on the situation at headquarters. "We are losing ground every day," Ickes fretted. "Meanwhile, the President smiles and sails and fishes and the rest of us worry and fume."²⁹

While Franklin was cruising on the *Sewanna*, before going to Campobello his wife stopped in at headquarters to meet with Farley, who dealt with her as one professional to another, for she was a woman, he felt, who had a "real 'sense of politics' " and a "genuine gift for organization work."³⁰ She also had sessions with Molly Dewson, Stanley High, a former clergyman whose journalistic aptitude made him a fluent speech writer, and Michelson. Afterward she drafted several brisk memoranda. The basic one went to the president with copies to Farley, Michelson, High, Early, and Molly Dewson: "My feeling is that we have to get going and going quickly." She listed the questions she had brought up in her conferences at headquarters, to which she thought there ought to be answers in black and white that would reach "us" at Eastport by July 27 or 28 "when the President expects to be there." She urged that the publicity-steering committee be organized immediately, asked that minutes be kept of its meetings and that a copy be sent to the president, "and if the committee is willing, one to me as well." Some of the questions: Who was responsible for suggesting answers to charges, etc.? Who would actually do the radio work under the aegis of the publicity committee? Who was in charge of research? ("I gather if the President o.k.'s it, the aggressive campaign against Landon's record will begin before Landon's acceptance speech.") Who was collecting and organizing the Landon data? There were twelve questions in all, ending with the suggestion that Representative Sam Rayburn of Texas, who was to head the Speakers Bureau, should come in "at once to plan the policy and mechanics" and the additional suggestion that it would be well

to start some Negro speakers, like Mrs. [Mary McLeod] Bethune to speak at church meetings and that type of Negro organization. More and more my reports indicate that this is a close election and that we need very excellent organization. That is why I am trying to clarify in my own mind the functions at headquarters and have the President see a picture of the organization as clearly as possible in order that he may make any suggestions that he thinks necessary.

A supplementary letter to Farley expressed the hope "that when Ed Flynn gets back you will draw him into headquarters not only for consultation but for some definite responsibility. He is a pretty good executive organizer and Louis found him very valuable in the last campaign." Louis had trained her well.³¹

The memos she requested arrived at Campobello: two pages from Charlie Michelson; a "things are beginning to click" outline from Stanley High, who was heading up the Good Neighbor League; an explanation from Steve Early that he had been tied down at the White House and able, therefore, to spend only one day at headquarters; a letter from Rayburn's assistant saying he would reply when he arrived in New York (which turned out to be August 18); and a nine-page single-spaced letter from Farley. Yes, he would draw in

Ed Flynn "full time." They were keeping minutes at headquarters and Eleanor and the president would receive copies. Leon Henderson, formerly chief economist of the NRA, was being brought in to head up research. Eddie Roddan was compiling the material on Landon. He (Farley) would cooperate in every way with the Labor party that Sidney Hillman was organizing in New York State and thought it would bring an added 150,000 voters to the national ticket. He reviewed the situation state by state and promised to send her all reports and letters that came in from the states. So far as Negro participation in the campaign was concerned, Will Alexander, Tugwell's deputy at the Resettlement Administration, was drafting the committee's plans. Farley did not think it wise to move too actively in August, he summed up, except to tool up the headquarters operation; but the president should, as he had planned, travel widely and inspect New Deal projects.

Though Farley was optimistic he was not yet ready to predict, as he did just before election, that Roosevelt would carry forty-six out of the forty-eight states. Far from it. In early August he forwarded to Eleanor a supporter's dream that Roosevelt "would win the election by a large majority, carrying 37 states . . . [including] Mr. Landon's home state," and his accompanying comment was that "we must get a few laughs out of the campaign." Uncertain about the outcome, Farley felt that the more militant New Dealers should be sidelined during the campaign, meaning especially Rex Tugwell and Harry Hopkins. Was it accidental that when the president's schooner pulled into Welchpool, Harry Hopkins was there, he and his wife having come as guests of Eleanor Roosevelt?

She herself was a controversial figure in the 1936 campaign, and some of the president's more skittish advisers, although not Farley, "felt that she ought to stay in the background."³² Her support of Negro rights (see Chapter 44), her insistence on pursuing her own career, her outspoken views, often slightly in advance of those of her husband, and the widespread complaint that she had commercialized the First Lady's role caused some politicians to fear that the campaign might well turn into a referendum on whether the public preferred the old or new style of presidential wife. Alice Longworth hinted at this in an article she wrote on the ideal qualifications of a president's wife. She by no means disapproved of Eleanor's conduct as First Lady; in fact, as an activist herself with an insatiable interest in politics, she rather admired her cousin, but in her article she wondered whether people might not feel that "we didn't elect her, what is she horning in for?"³³

The American Liberty League made Eleanor a primary target in its efforts to lure the Democratic South away from Roosevelt. Early in 1936 Raskob, duPont, and Sloan helped finance a gathering of southern Democrats in Macon, Georgia. Its purpose was to assault the New Deal root, branch, and leaf, and to launch a presidential boom for Georgia Governor Eugene Talmadge, idol of the wool-hat boys who referred to Roosevelt as "that cripple in the White House." As the "grass roots" Democrats filed into the hall for the meeting every seat had on it a copy of the *Georgia Woman's World*, featuring a

two-column photograph which Vance Muse, the promoter of the meeting, described as "a picture of Mrs. Roosevelt going to some Nigger meeting, with two escorts, Niggers, on each arm." Harry Hopkins accused Sam Jones, a Washington public-relations man who worked for the Republicans, of having hatched the plans "to smear Mrs. Roosevelt in Georgia."³⁴

Among the hate items circulated anonymously in the campaign was a bit of rhymed scurrility directed at both the Roosevelts:

You kiss the negroes
I'll kiss the Jews
We'll stay in the White House,
As long as we choose. . . .

Steve Early and Marvin McIntyre, both southerners and both among the president's more conservative advisers, were unhappy about Eleanor's racial views. Steve was furious, she knew, although he did not say anything to her, about her garden party for the girls from the reformatory in the District of Columbia. Eleanor had visited the District's Training School for Delinquent Girls early in May, 1936, and, "horrified" by the conditions she found there, she determined to draw the attention of Congress and the District commissioners to them. Consequently, she invited the head of the school to bring her girls, three-quarters of them Negro, to the White House. "They were treated exactly as any other guests are treated and taken to see exactly what any other guests are taken to see." She made one concession to local custom: the girls, Negro and white, remained in separate groups, segregated as they were at the school, and were served refreshments in separate tents. A few Negroes were offended that Eleanor, too, had deferred to the pattern of segregation, but the bulk of the Negro press realized that the important issue was not the segregation but that the First Lady had received as White House guests a group of girls most of whom were colored. The *Afro-American* noted that she did this in the wake of criticism "for appearing at colored gatherings and posing for photographs with colored people. . . . When she's right, the President's wife knows no such word as retreat." She knew that Steve had blown up to others, including the president, about this garden party; "Franklin, however, never said anything to me about it."³⁵

She so worried some of the president's aides that there were reports she was considering curtailing some of her outside activities in view of the elections. To a friend who wrote expressing the hope that one such report was in error, she replied, "The piece in the paper had no basis—in fact I have neither talked to anyone or considered doing anything different from what I have always done."³⁶ Carrie Chapman Catt had been apprehensive that the campaign would increase the attacks on Mrs. Roosevelt. "The wife of a President or any other high official, suffered more from attacks upon him and his policies than did the man himself," she cautioned her friend, adding that she was sure "these were not altogether comfortable times for you." She was wasting her sympathy, Eleanor gently advised her: "I think I am more hardened to criticism than the

President is, and it makes very little dent upon me, unless I think there is some real justification and something should be done."³⁷

In March, the newspaper women had put on a skit at their annual party that underscored how drastically Eleanor Roosevelt had transformed the role of First Lady. A solemn-faced delegation appeared before a masked woman to inform her that her husband had been nominated for president and that she, as well as he, had to prove she was equal to the office. Then the delegation fired such questions at her as:

"How many speeches can you make in twenty-four hours?"

"Have you ever gone down in a coal mine?"

"Can you write a newspaper column with one hand and shake 500 hands with the other?"

"How's your radio voice?"

"How many places can you be at the same time?"

"Can you remodel a White House kitchen?"

"How many states of mind are bounded by Reedsville, West Va.?" At this point the prospective First Lady fainted away.³⁸

Ignoring the testimony of the newspaper women that the people liked their activist First Lady, the Republican strategists decided to make a campaign issue out of the proposition that Mrs. Landon would be different. Miss Nathalie Couch, a head of the Republican women's division, flew out to Topeka, Kansas, and after conferring with the Landons said she knew of no plans for Mrs. Landon's participation in the campaign. She expressed pointed admiration for the way Mrs. Landon was conducting herself, particularly her attempts to stay in the campaign background. "Mrs. Alf M. Landon does not intend to accompany her husband on any of his campaign trips and will devote the time from now until election to the care of her family," the *New York Times* began its account of one of the rare press conferences Mrs. Landon held. As the wife of the governor she had never held a press conference, Mrs. Landon noted, and intimated she would hold few in the future. "If Governor Landon is elected, Mrs. Landon will spend her time in the White House," Republican women orators proclaimed at their rallies.³⁹

The homebody image the Republicans tried to create of Mrs. Landon caused great amusement among the Democratic women working in the campaign. "She did not dare open her lips. She was kept under very close control."

It was not Republican strategists alone who completely misread how women felt about the President's wife. A Democratic decision that although Eleanor could accompany the president on his campaign train she should stay out of sight did not survive the train's first stop. "Then it was discovered that the crowds wanted Mrs. Roosevelt. If she failed to appear on the platform they shouted for her until she did appear, and they cheered her just as heartily as her husband, sometimes more heartily. She smiled and waved but made no speeches. She never does when her husband is about."⁴⁰ Scripps-Howard columnist Thomas Stokes was struck by the way the faces of women "would blossom in smiles and up went their hands in salute" when they spotted Eleanor on

to realize what the true story is on the whole Bridges question. Frances has it and, it seems to me, could give it to the heads of the different organizations if they would only request it. Then their backing could be made vocal. At present, many of the Federation of Women's Clubs members, who met down here, are down on Frances because they believe she is a Communist. When you get women started along those lines they are like sheep. They think Dies is doing a wonderful job and do not realize that he is doing something to make himself personally popular with the sole idea of being candidate for President, and Miss Perkins was the easiest victim.

Frances does not know how to get on with newspaper people and neither has she a secretary who can do it. I did suggest that she try to get someone who would handle the press for her, but so far as I know she has never done it.³⁶

Eleanor helped Frances, although she sensed a reserve in Frances's attitude toward her—perhaps it was Frances's fear that working too closely with Eleanor might make life more difficult for her in the man's world of the labor movement. The labor leaders had originally urged Roosevelt to appoint a man, and one of the stories current in Washington which, while not wholly accurate, was said to be in character so far as Eleanor was involved, described her as commiserating with her husband for the bad hour he must have put in with the labor leaders when he told them he had already made up his mind to appoint Miss Perkins. "Oh, that's all right," Roosevelt was said to have replied. "I'd rather have trouble with them for an hour than have trouble with you for the rest of my life." But it was Molly, not Eleanor, who had organized the campaign for Frances in 1933, and when in 1939 Roosevelt asked his wife to tell Miss Perkins, if she got the chance, not to oppose a reorganization measure that took the Employment Service out of the Labor Department, Eleanor passed the job on to Molly: "I think if you speak to her, it will have more weight than if I were to do it?"³⁷

As at Albany, civic organizations prospered under Eleanor's patronage. She brought the White House closer to the civic-minded through their organizations, and by getting them a hearing from the president enabled him to hear viewpoints that otherwise might not have reached him. Organizations like the League of Women Voters, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the National Public Housing Conference, the National Consumers League, the National Sharecroppers Fund, and the Conference on the Cause and Cure of War as well as the more radical groups such as the Workers Alliance and the American Youth Congress suddenly felt themselves on the inside of government, holding their sessions at the White House, being briefed by the First Lady on the president's plans and difficulties, and, because of her sponsorship, getting a hearing from press and public. "What on earth would I do without you in the White House?" Lucy Randolph Mason, a key CIO official in the South, exclaimed after an expression of interest by Eleanor had finally brought intervention by the Department of Justice in the case of a union organizer who had been badly beaten in Georgia.³⁸

Eleanor's assistance to the housing groups when they convened in Washington in January, 1937, to press for passage of the Wagner Housing Act made up for what they considered the president's lack of enthusiasm for the bill in the

previous session of Congress. Eleanor addressed the conference, invited its leaders to the White House to fill them in on the president's thinking, and relayed messages from them to the president and from the president to them.³⁹

This time, with an assist from the president, the Wagner-Steagall bill was approved, and in September the United States Housing Authority was created. Nathan Straus was appointed administrator, and he promptly wrote Eleanor, hailing her as "one of the first 'housers' in the country" and expressing the hope that he could discuss his problems with her. "We are all very much pleased that, when it is organized, you will be able to have the new housing group at the White House for one meeting at which you will preside. . . ." He regularly sent her the figures on the housing loans that he had approved and reports on the progress of the projects, and he even discussed the design of the apartments with her. To install closet doors, as she had suggested, would add approximately \$225 to the cost of a dwelling unit, he advised her; every extra feature added to the costs and if he did not keep rehousing down to minimal standards he might endanger his hope to rehouse all slum dwellers. She did not protest, as she was more realistic now than she had been in 1934 about what Congress might be expected to sanction. "Surely closet doors are not worth \$225 per house!" she agreed. "Come to lunch to talk it over."⁴⁰

She mediated between Esther Lape's Committee of Physicians and the president in regard to improved medical services. Esther had moved the American Foundation, of which she was the member-in-charge, into the field of the organization of medical care. Organized medicine, particularly the American Medical Association, had successfully resisted the inclusion of compulsory health insurance in the social-security system when it was set up, and in order to keep the issue alive Roosevelt had appointed an Interdepartmental Committee to develop a program to strengthen the nation's health services. But this committee had gone about its studies in a leisurely manner and Roosevelt appeared to have forgotten about the group when Esther moved in. Together with a group of liberal doctors she had completed a massive survey of medical practitioners on whether and how medical care should be reorganized. The report, published in two large volumes, showed that the AMA's opposition to government involvement in the delivery of medical services and the maintenance of standards did not represent the views of the medical profession in general.

Esther wanted the president not simply to glance at the survey but really to digest it, she told Eleanor, even though she knew better than to expect the president to go through two fat volumes. Earlier Esther had mentioned some thoughts she had on government's relationship to business, and Eleanor told her to write them down and she would give them to Franklin. "Oh, he would not be interested," Esther protested. "Franklin is interested in any idea that can be written down on one page," Eleanor replied. Although the President had told Esther and Elizabeth when they had talked with him in July, 1936, that he would meet with their Physicians Committee "if they had agreed upon any clear point of view," Eleanor found him reluctant to do so when she brought up

Esther's request for a meeting in February, 1937. She pried the reason out of him. "Somehow or other, Franklin had it in his mind that he would in some way have to line up with someone and he was not ready to do that." When Eleanor assured him that this would not be the case, she was able to arrange a date. She "infinitely" preferred one, Esther hastily notified her, when Eleanor could be present, even if it meant some delay. She sent along the names of her Physicians Committee.⁴¹

Franklin did not want to have dinner. "Lunch with me first," Eleanor had Tommy wire Esther. "Thursday April 8th. As much time as they want." In their talk with the president the doctors urged a partnership between government, medical schools, and hospitals in order to raise the standards of all medical care and to provide medical attention for the indigent. The first practical step was to establish a Planning Commission to formulate a national policy, they said, which led to the rediscovery of the Interdepartmental Committee under Josephine Roche, and the president asked Dr. McIntire to talk Esther's proposals over with the committee "and let me have a recommendation."

When the AMA learned what was going on at the White House it lifted the statement of principles Esther's committee had left with the president and endorsed them. Esther was not sure whether to be elated or alarmed, she wrote Eleanor; "Of course they tacked on some nullifying clauses designed to lodge everything with the AMA. This will never do. But it is revolutionary to have these principles put forth under those auspices." In any case it was more important than ever to go ahead with the Planning Commission.⁴²

The president evidently thought so, too, for, Eleanor telegraphed Esther, "Franklin thinks it important to move at once. Will see you Monday or Tuesday a.m." In the end, Roosevelt decided not to appoint a new commission but to have Josephine Roche's committee bring in a report, which it did in February, 1938.

Guided by the Roche Report and urged on by Esther and her group, Roosevelt suggested to his Interdepartmental Committee that they convene a conference to secure the backing of medical science as well as public-health and citizens' groups for a program of action. Esther had reservations about the Roche Report, which she felt did not sufficiently reflect medical and administrative realities. But the president had one central concern: "Esther, my interest is in getting *some* kind of medical care to the submerged third that has now practically none."⁴³ The conference was held in July, 1938. Out of it emerged the Wagner Health Act of 1939, but the AMA raised the cry of "socialized medicine" and the bill never came out of committee.

Esther refused to give up. Her group of doctors were "the genuine representatives of a powerful group of leading medical scientists opposed to the reactionary policy of the AMA," she wrote Eleanor begging her once more to arrange a meeting with the president. "Could you have the meeting here in September?" Eleanor queried her husband. By September war had broken out in Europe and Roosevelt had little time to think about health legislation, and in fact though there would have to be some health proposals ready for the 1940 session, he was hesitant about meeting with Esther's group. "Franklin says he

does not want to get into any difficulty with the AMA just now when he has so much to contend with, and asks that this just be an off-the-record meeting." He saw them at the house rather than in the executive offices, and Eleanor served tea.⁴⁴

Franklin was in retreat on domestic legislation in general. Although he adopted the reasoning of Esther's group, the "beginning" he suggested fell far short of their hopes. He asked Congress to authorize the construction of small hospitals in the needy areas of the country, "instead of waiting for a complete and perfected plan," such as the Wagner bill, "which would cost an awful lot of money."⁴⁵ This proposal, however, never emerged from committee either.

Roosevelt wanted medical care for the needy, but it is questionable whether he would ever have become as involved as he did without Esther's committee and Eleanor's mediation. Eleanor made a career of supplying the president with ideas of what might be done, placing him in touch with people and programs that otherwise might not have gained his attention.

Ickes did not approve of circumventing channels to reach the president, and called it getting in to see the president "through Mrs. R.'s back door." But this "back door" route to the president was open with Roosevelt's acquiescence. It enabled him to talk with people without the press knowing it and without the formality of giving them appointments. He recognized his wife's right to have as guests people who interested her as well as her friends, and if as a consequence Quaker pacifists, radicals, reformers, youth leaders, and "housers," who somehow neither he nor his secretaries ever managed to find time for, had a chance to talk with him, it was no disaster. He liked people and dominated the table talk no matter who the guests were, although he might comment to his staff the next morning that "Eleanor had a lot of 'do-gooders' for dinner and you know what that means." However, it was healthy for his staff to be aware that there were routes to his presence that they did not control. Eleanor did not abuse this prerogative. When she sensed that someone bored or irritated her husband, she had them to lunch or tea, and if she felt he might not want to see someone for political reasons, she made inquiries beforehand and guided herself accordingly. In any case, the list of dinner guests was always sent up to Missy, and if the guests did not interest him, Franklin pleaded work and dined in his oval study.⁴⁶

As the thirties drew to a close, the jobless seemed to Eleanor to be a standing indictment of the American economy and an unredeemed claim on its conscience. She had grown close to Hopkins and the WPA because he and his top people were as ready as she to try unorthodox, even radical, methods to help the jobless. Franklin sensed political danger in the work projects started by the WPA for unemployed artists, musicians, writers, actors, and women, but Eleanor was all for them. There was "not the slightest doubt" in Aubrey Williams' mind "that had it not been for Harry Hopkins and Mrs. Roosevelt, for she was a powerful influence in support of width and variety in the work projects, the work program would have been much more limited in its variety and character."⁴⁷

Eleanor wanted the well-off to visit the WPA projects because that would

alist territory. Franco's troops were laying siege to the Basque stronghold in northern Spain, which though strongly Catholic was fervently Republican. The State Department, prodded by Eleanor, obtained a promise from Franco that children could be taken through the lines to safety zones.³⁹

The friends of the Loyalists wanted to bring five hundred of the evacuated children to the United States, partly because it was a safe refuge, but also because of the propaganda value. Eleanor opposed this, feeling that it was fairer to the children and their parents to keep them as close to home as possible. When some of her friends began to accuse the State and Labor Departments of creating artificial obstacles, she showed annoyance: "Emotionally it is very easy to say that we should receive the children in this country, but it requires a little more than emotion to do the wise thing." It was difficult not to react emotionally in the face of Franco's indiscriminate bombing of Madrid and Bilbao, Martha said in defense of herself and others who supported the evacuation. She did not mean, Eleanor replied,

that one should not feel emotionally about things that are happening in Spain. I should think, with your friends and your knowledge of what is going on, you would feel emotional. I simply meant that in our feelings towards the children we must not let our best judgment be warped by our emotions. . . . I think Allen Wardwell will be successful in raising the money and supplies for us to send both to Spain and to the neighboring countries.⁴⁰

The money was raised and administered by the American Friends Service Committee.

The Catholics were apprehensive over Eleanor's increasingly open expressions of sympathy for the Spanish Republic. Patrick Scanlan, managing editor of the diocesan paper the *Brooklyn Tablet*, noted that she was a sponsor of a fiesta the proceeds of which were to be used to purchase milk for the "distressed children" of Spain. "Might we ask, however, if the proceeds are to be used for needy children in Nationalist as well as Loyalist territory in the war . . . ?" "Dear Sir," she replied with terse formality. "I make no distinction in children. Any needing help should be helped."⁴¹

American Catholics sided with General Franco as strongly as New Dealers did with Republican Spain. And guarded though Eleanor was in her expressions of sympathy with the Republican cause, they did not escape the watchful eyes of a Church hierarchy, which was becoming increasingly hostile to her on other scores. The Knights of Columbus criticized her views on divorce; the bishops did not like her patronage of the American Youth Congress; her sponsorship of an educational film *Birth of a Baby* was denounced by Catholic women's groups as an "offense" to Catholics; Church officials smarted when she protested Franco's aerial bombardment of Barcelona and wondered out loud why women everywhere did not rise up and refuse to bring children into this kind of world. He was outraged, wrote Gustave Regler, German novelist, Catholic, and commissar in the International Brigade, that the Catholics should be scandalized by the filming of a healthy baby in the process of birth and at the same time "not have one word for the dead children of Barcelona."⁴²

A longhand letter came to Eleanor from Señora de los Rios, the wife of the Spanish ambassador. She spoke of the horrors of the bombardment of Barcelona, the deaths of hundreds of women and children. Could not the United States use its great authority to make an appeal in the name of democracy and humanity putting forward a formula for peace? Eleanor replied that she felt helpless: "I wish that I were not in the White House at the present time and could be free to make some statement."⁴³

Catholic opposition to any move that might help the Loyalists immobilized the president. "When the audiences in my meetings started cheering Loyalist Spain," wrote Regler, "they often called and cheered the name Roosevelt at the same time as a soldier on the battlefield of freedom." But the president, fearful of isolationist sentiment, even more fearful of the loss of the Catholic vote which had been strongly New Deal, and intent on keeping his position aligned with Britain and France, supported the League's policy of nonintervention.

As German and Italian intervention became more blatant and massive, friends of the Spanish Republic in the United States mounted an agitated campaign to lift the embargo on Spain. Within the White House Eleanor was its chief supporter. Journalist Louis Fischer, an authority on Soviet foreign policy, came to see her to argue the case for lifting the embargo. Eleanor wrote Fischer a few days later:

I talked to the President and told him what you said. He agrees with you, but feels that it would be absolutely impossible to repeal the Neutrality Act, because the people of this country feel that it was designed to keep us out of war, and, on the whole, it is the best instrument to accomplish that end. He feels certain that we could not get the people to change this point of view without a period of education and perhaps from experiences which they have not yet had.⁴⁴

Many thought the president had the authority without going to Congress to revoke the embargo on Spain, and the Lawyers Committee on American Relations with Spain prepared a brief to that effect. "FDR material you may like to see," Eleanor wrote on this. Witter Bynner, author and a Harvard classmate of Roosevelt's, pleaded the same case in a letter to Eleanor which she also passed on. "The only thing that can be said," Roosevelt advised her, "is that it seems *more* than doubtful that any action to lift the embargo can be taken legally." Bynner thought that "Frank," as he called him, while "sympathetically inclined towards the Loyalists," had been badly advised. Eleanor, too, was mistrustful of the State Department. "I rather gathered that the French assistance to the Spanish was not great," she agreed with Martha Gellhorn. "And I gather that even our own State Department has people who are not very anxious to do much for the Loyalists. Strange how easily our profits affect our feelings for democracy!"⁴⁵

Max Lerner, sitting next to Eleanor at a refugee-aid dinner, warned her that he would have to attack the president sharply on the embargo issue. "Say what you think and feel," she replied unhesitatingly. "My husband would want you to. There are so many from the other side who are pushing him from their

MEMORANDUM

TO: Thurgood Marshall, Jr.
Kim Tilley

FM: Alan Cohn

RE: Principal Testimony before Congress

DT: 8/31/93

According to your search, Only the President, Vice President, and Second Ladies have testified before Congressional Committees. Listed below are the Principal, the issue on which they testified, and the year in which they testified.

Year	President	Vice President	First Lady	Second Lady
1789	Washington re: Creek Indian Treaty			
1919	Wilson re: reason for Est of League of Nations			
1974	Ford re: reason for Nixon Pardon			
1975		Rockefeller re:estab of OSTP		
1979				Mondale re: funding for elderly activities
1980				Mondale re: funding for Arts & Humanities
1990				Quayle re: Women's health
1990				Quayle re: Race for the cure (Cancer)

The Washington Post

July 30, 1989, Sunday, Final Edition

HEADLINE: The Second Ladies: In the Shadow's Shadow

BYLINE: Carl Sferrazza Anthony, Special to The Washington Post

BODY: When once a plain, plump, graying woman walked up the White House steps, the chief usher stopped her to ask who she was and what she wanted. She was the vice president's wife, and she'd come to a reception to which she'd been invited, she said. She was Bess Truman.

By its very name, the role of "Second Lady" seems to carry implicit sublimation. The woman behind the man behind the man, silent partner to a husband whose job was said not to be worth "a bucket of warm spit."

Most were of little consequence, but several Seconds made a difference. On the whole, they make a quirkier lot than the Firsts, and yet, curiously, nobody in the 200 years of the presidency has considered them as a group.

Abigail Adams eminently preferred being the first Second Lady to being the second First Lady, simply because she could be politically influential over her husband without attracting any public attention. At the same time, President George Washington was so protective of Mrs. Adams's role that he guarded her seat of honor from being occupied by any others at receptions; her personal friendship with the president bridged the frigid gulf between him and the vice president.

The upturned nose of Floride Calhoun, Carolina gentry and Second Lady of the first Jackson administration, shook a cabinet off its hinges. It was Mrs. Calhoun who first stirred the "Eaton Affair," by refusing to socially recognize the president's beloved favorite, Peggy Eaton, a woman with a past with men in the Navy, and wife of Jackson's secretary of -- what else? -- the Navy. Since Andrew Jackson was a widower, Second Lady Floride led the protocol pack, and she brought "the Eaton snub," strictly followed by Cabinet wives, into vogue. Jackson demanded that John Calhoun and the other husbands demand that Floride and their wives show Mrs. Eaton courtesy. "She is chaste as a virgin!" he thundered. They refused, and Jackson took it as a sign of disloyalty, accentuating the tension that existed between him and the vice president. He demanded, and got, Cabinet resignations. And chose widower Martin Van Buren for his next vice president.

Garlanded and bedecked in the height of '90s fashion, Jennie Hobart, the first Second Lady to write her memoirs, became a cherished confidant of President William McKinley when he delicately approached her to help maintain a secret about the First Lady, who

suffered from epilepsy. Dosed with bromides and propped up in a vast dark armchair lined in blue velvet, Ida McKinley was displayed, but too sedated to greet guests. Mrs. Hobart hovered protectively by Ida's side, and sometimes moved to block guests, literally. To ward off visitors' attempts to shake Mrs. McKinley's hand, Jennie Hobart loaded a circus-size bouquet in her ward's lap, slid in front of her, and extended her glove to the persistent glad-hander, asking, "Wouldn't you rather shake hands with me?" During the crisis of the Maine and through the tense weeks of the Spanish-American War, Mrs. Hobart alleviated the president's official burdens by vigilantly watching over Mrs. McKinley, a responsibility he assumed under normal circumstances.

During World War I, Lois Marshall marshaled. She rallied 96 women accustomed to euchre and teacups to work three days a week rolling bandages, knitting trench caps and sewing pajamas for the doughboys. As wife of the man who presided over the Senate, Mrs. Marshall organized the "Ladies of the Senate" (still existing), as a cohesive group, to do its part for the war effort, and, when the war was over, persuaded the members to continue coming to work, with lunch in brown bags, to help the Red Cross. She became the only Second Lady to receive a Congressional pension as a widow.

Paralleling the political tightrope her husband must walk, the Second Lady is expected to always be available to help, but not too much. At Grace Coolidge's first open house "at home," in the vice president's Willard Hotel suite, the throng was so thick it snaked out onto Pennsylvania Avenue. Mrs. Coolidge cracked that if First Lady Florence Harding could have garden parties, she could have "sidewalk parties." When Mrs. Harding became ill, Mrs. Coolidge assumed most of her social obligations, and within weeks became the most popular woman in the newspaper social columns. Too popular, it turned out, at least as far as the jealous -- and recuperating and powerful -- Mrs. Harding was concerned. When the first congressional appropriations bill proposing an official vice presidential mansion appeared in the Senate, Florence Harding rasped, "Not a bit of it! Not a bit of it! A hotel apartment is good enough for them! I'm going to kill that bill."

Grace Coolidge kept living at the Willard.

The status of Second Lady became a subject of political debate when bachelor Vice President Charles Curtis designated his sister, political activist Dolly Gann, as his "official hostess," pressing the claim that she outranked the speaker's wife. Her protocol seating rank remained unresolved, but the role was now publicly acknowledged.

Though Cary May Wallace, the second of three Second Ladies in the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration, was a trained agriculturist, she'd long turned in the hoe. The question of a Second Lady maintaining her own profession was, however, raised by the first of the trio: Ettie Garner, an otherwise obscure woman. Mrs. Garner, who wore cracked spectacles, was a whiz at stenography. As wife of the speaker of the House she'd worked as his secretary, maintaining a little office beside an elevator shaft and cooking his sandwiches on an electric grill. When she became Second Lady she fearfully asked Eleanor Roosevelt if her secretarial skills would now have to rust. Her question

prompted Mrs. Roosevelt -- who was then also fearing that she'd have to stop her work as a writer -- into deciding that they could do as they wished. Mrs. Garner typed on.

It was Mamie Eisenhower's "Rock of Gibraltar," Pat Nixon, who gave public substance to the role of Second Lady. Recognizing the ceremonial value, Mrs. Nixon always joined her husband at airport welcomes, international fact-finding missions and the ubiquitous chicken dinners the president and First Lady turned down. She was the first Second Lady to campaign actively and publicly on solo tours, and traveled more extensively than any Lady -- First or Second -- before her. On one month-long journey alone she covered the entire globe. On foreign trips, rather than tag behind her husband, she mapped out her own public schedule into hospital wards, orphanages, even a leper's colony. In Caracas, Venezuela, her car, separated from the vice president's, was smashed by stones and rocked, but upon her return she was hailed by President Dwight Eisenhower as part of a public, political "team."

The vice presidents' wives also began assuming political roles. When Lady Bird Johnson campaigned for Second Lady, she was spat upon for espousing civil rights. In "office" she baked sugar cookies in the shape of Texas for the Senate Ladies, and invited them for dips in LBJ's pool at "The Elms," the former home of Perle Mesta. Smiling, Mrs. Johnson led a Middle Eastern camel driver on a guided tour through the capital, and was on constant call to fill in for Mrs. Kennedy. She became the first Second Lady to deliver speeches on administration policy-related subjects.

Her successor, friend Muriel Humphrey, not only bowled with Lady Bird and cooked steaks for the Johnsons in the Humphrey apartment, but also served as a member of the President's Mental Retardation Committee, of personal interest to her because of a grandchild. She even had the honor of having a course at a White House state dinner named for her, "Pheasant Muriel." When Humphrey announced he was running for president without telling her, Muriel sent him a telegram: "Let me know if I can be of help." When Humphrey died while serving in the Senate, the former Second Lady became a U.S. senator herself.

Happy Rockefeller was the first of the Second Ladies to occupy and decorate the vice presidential mansion on Massachusetts Avenue -- with a modern pop-art bed that raised the ire and eyebrows of staid capital society. With a predilection for pop herself, "Joan of Art" Mondale became the official Carter administration spokesman for the arts, testifying at congressional hearings, lobbying for arts funding and serving as honorary chair of the Federal Council on the Arts. Barbara Bush adopted illiteracy as her official "project," ghost-wrote the memoirs of Second Pooch C. Fred Bush as a means of raising funds for illiteracy, made headlines by describing the first woman vice presidential candidate "with a word that rhymed with witch," but then wittily declared that the "poet laureate has retired."

Now, Marilyn Quayle, the first lawyer in the role, has officially taken on "natural disasters" as her concern. There was some talk of the possibility that she'd become the second Second to serve in the Senate, fulfilling her husband's uncompleted term, but the

governor of Indiana appointed Dan Coats to the job. Mrs. Quayle said recently she was still open to the possibility of returning to work as a lawyer. Acknowledging her advisory and secondary role, she told local television reporter Susan King that the toughest adjustment to being Second Lady is being ignored by people who step in front of her to shake the vice president's hand in receiving lines.

It's an unofficially official post, a shadow of the shadow that's a heartbeat away. Many Seconds had been ambitious rivals of the ladies who got to be First because their husbands frequently applied for the same job, and were then doomed to play perpetual matron of honor in the world of political wifery. Still, if nobody was listening to the noise coming from the second chair second fiddle, and their improvisations were often undirected by the maestro, at least they did things their way.

GRAPHIC: PHOTO, PAT NIXON ON THE CAMPAIGN 1960.; , AT LEFT, MRS. HERNY WALLACE. BELOW, MRS. EDWARD GANN, SISTER OF BACHELOR VICE PRESIDENT CHARLES CURTIS.; , CURRENT SECOND LADY MARILYN QUAYLE.

TYPE: FEATURE

SUBJECT: VICE PRESIDENT; FAMILY LIFE

NAMED-PERSONS: MARILYN QUAYLE

Source?

Lady Bird Johnson

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of her time on official duties.⁶⁵ Unlike other First Ladies, the time expended did not trouble or annoy Mrs. Johnson, and she commented, "I knew a unique page out of a long life and interesting official duties."⁶⁶

APPROACHES TO COMMUNICATION ✓

Preparation for Speaking

Mrs. Johnson characterized her early political speaking as "brief, scared, personal, on the Lyndon I knew—not on issues."⁶⁷ Shy and nervous before audiences, Mrs. Johnson spoke rapidly, her vocal pitch rising, "and the words . . . rolling out one after the other."⁶⁸

In an attempt to improve her oral skills, Mrs. Johnson began studying with a speech teacher. She learned to relax and "how to organize material and how to sit and stand on the speaker's platform."⁶⁹

Preparation of Texts

According to her staff director and press secretary Liz Carpenter, the writing of Mrs. Johnson's speeches was occasionally a cooperative effort, but most often the result of a collaboration between herself and the First Lady.⁷⁰

In planning a speech, Mrs. Johnson would ask Carpenter to analyze her prospective audience. "Who am I looking at?" she would ask. The First Lady wanted to know three or four things about her listeners.

Mrs. Johnson would read background material and briefing papers, or would just think about her topic, and then she and Carpenter would discuss the speech. Carpenter would jot down certain phrases used by Mrs. Johnson as they spoke.

Later, Carpenter would "marry phrases" and weave together a speech. Mrs. Johnson would edit the draft and make additions, corrections, and deletions. Mrs. Johnson characterized this phase of preparation as "all very hard work."⁷¹

Occasionally Carpenter would consult experts in various government agencies to provide facts and figures. Sometimes these agencies would send the First Lady "suggested remarks" she could give on a topic or even drafts of entire speeches. Presidential speechwriters occasionally contributed ideas and drafts for speeches. Sharon Francis, a member of the First Lady's staff, wrote many of Mrs. Johnson's speeches on beautification.⁷² Liz Carpenter, however, was the First Lady's primary ghostwriter.

Communication Style and Delivery

Lady Bird Johnson's speeches were not inspirational or moving, but were well-reasoned, carefully worded attempts to educate. The First Lady became known for her descriptive style. Carpenter said that one of Mrs. Johnson's English teachers was responsible for this trait in the First Lady's oral and written dis-

course. The teacher advised the young Lady Bird never to use the same word or phrase twice within a speech, and to utilize descriptive adjectives whenever possible. According to Carpenter, this training made Mrs. Johnson a wordsmith, and she favored the use of metaphors, "non-trite" words, and active verbs. Mrs. Johnson devoted a great deal of practice time to every speech, "whether . . . five minutes or thirty minutes."⁷³

Press Relations

A journalism major, Lady Bird Johnson understood the needs of the working press. According to Carpenter, "She knew the language of the trade, the difference between an A.M. and P.M. deadline, that it was better to be accessible than evasive."⁷⁴ Moreover, Mrs. Johnson genuinely liked the newswomen who covered her activities.

The First Lady appointed her old friend, the former Executive Assistant to the Vice President, Elizabeth S. ("Liz") Carpenter to the position of Staff Director and Press Secretary to the First Lady. Carpenter's appointment was historic in that she was the first professional newswoman to direct a First Lady's East Wing press operation.

Experienced and knowledgeable, Mrs. Carpenter assured the First Lady efficient press relations. The new press secretary solicited advice on running the press office from former press colleagues. Their advice essentially consisted of three suggestions: "Never lie. Tell us that you can't tell us, but don't lie. Return our phone calls. Don't resent our intrusion. It's our job to know where the First Lady is and what she is doing."⁷⁵ Carpenter never saw her role as shielding the First Lady from the press, but rather saw herself as "a person hired to accommodate the representatives of public curiosity."⁷⁶

Mrs. Johnson did not hold press conferences. Carpenter felt that they put the First Lady on guard and made her say things that sounded unnatural.⁷⁷ Instead, Carpenter held occasional press briefings; there were always briefings prior to one of the First Lady's trips, and reporters knew that Carpenter would call them if a story came up.⁷⁸ Marie Smith of the *Washington Post* said, "We know Liz will call us if there is a story and if she calls us, there is a story."⁷⁹ In addition, Carpenter arranged interviews and distributed press releases, schedules, and texts of the First Lady's speeches. Always accessible, she averaged 150 telephone calls per day from the press.⁸⁰

The press gave the First Lady uniformly excellent reviews. Nan Robertson of the *New York Times* wrote: "The First Lady . . . has an instinctive sense of public relations polished during nearly 28 years in public life. . . . [S]he is sympathetic to reporters' problems and needs."⁸¹ Mrs. Johnson's relationship with reporters was cordial, and she enjoyed efficient and productive press relations.

speakers. Mrs. Ford did little speaking during her husband's brief tenure as Vice President.

Communication Style and Delivery

Betty Ford's speeches differ from those of her predecessors; her talk is characterized by informality, warmth, and folksiness. Her discourses were not stylistically complex. She did not quote from outside sources frequently. Phrasing was simple; the First Lady said what was on her mind without equivocation or guile. Frances "Kay" Pullen served as her primary speech-writer.

Mrs. Ford enjoyed speaking, though she admitted to stage fright and a preference for having a speech text in front of her "in case I go blind, deaf and dumb and I can read it. I know it's like a security blanket."⁷⁰ In time the First Lady became a good extemporaneous speaker and was able to speak from "talking points," topic outlines for speeches.

The First Lady was especially sensitive to the mood of her listeners, and said, "I think being able to detect the reaction of your audience as to whether you ought to continue . . . maybe delete something then jump to something else or add a little something is important."⁷¹ Weidenfeld added, "She's a great ad-libber."⁷²

Press Relations

Betty Ford made a conscious decision to be more accessible to the press than her predecessor, Pat Nixon. Mrs. Ford said: "I did [decide to be more accessible to reporters] because . . . many stories had been written about Mrs. Nixon . . . referring to her as 'Pat, the unavailable.' They were unkind stories . . . and naturally, I was going to try and benefit from those criticisms of her."⁷³

Initially, Helen McCain Smith, Mrs. Nixon's press liaison, performed Mrs. Ford's press chores. In October 1974, Mrs. Ford appointed Sheila Rabb Weidenfeld, a television producer, to be her new press secretary. Weidenfeld felt that it was the job of the First Lady's press secretary "to communicate the human side of the First Lady and the First Family."⁷⁴

Weidenfeld explained that she did not have Mrs. Ford hold regularly scheduled press conferences because she did not want to overexpose the First Lady, and because Mrs. Ford "got too nervous. . . . She would not have done that well."⁷⁵ Still, Mrs. Ford saw reporters and answered their questions at various ceremonial or political events on a regular basis, and her press secretary attempted to answer additional press queries if possible.

Reporters sincerely liked Mrs. Ford, and enjoyed her "shoot from the hip" style. Helen Thomas commented, "She enchanted reporters from the outset with her frankness and strong stands on controversial issues."⁷⁶ Another Ford staff member noted that reporters loved the First Lady "because she was always good for a colorful quote."⁷⁷

✓ Mrs. Ford enjoyed the company of reporters, and described her press relations as being effective and pleasant. She commented: "I enjoyed the press. . . . We kidded a lot back and forth. . . . I was willing to accept a certain amount of criticism. . . . [T]hey . . . were surprised . . . to have me not beat around the bush and come right out and answer their questions."⁷⁸

Betty Ford saw the press as an ally to help her publicize her causes. She liked and respected reporters, and in turn she enjoyed exceptionally good press notices.

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCED THE FIRST LADY'S PERFORMANCE AS PUBLIC COMMUNICATOR

Relationship with Her Husband

By all accounts the Fords have and always have had a very happy marriage. It has been a traditional marriage: Jerry established himself in politics and Betty raised the children. Betty admitted to being resentful of her husband's unending travel, but this did not seem to diminish her love and support of him.⁷⁹ She trusted him implicitly and she told an interviewer, "I have perfect faith in my husband."⁸⁰ A longtime aide to Gerald Ford writes that Mrs. Ford's trust was well placed, and comments that Ford "was as devoted to his wife as he was career oriented."⁸¹

The Fords respected each other's opinions. Betty Ford had always spoken her mind; her candor in the White House did not startle Gerald Ford. To his credit, Gerald Ford never attempted to muzzle his wife, even when her views caused him political problems.⁸²

Mrs. Ford was not afraid to tell her husband what she thought, but tried to temper her remarks with consideration and love. She told a reporter, "I don't hesitate to tell him when I disagree with something he's done or said."⁸³ One of Gerald Ford's associates felt that Betty was one of the few people who could tell the President when he was not making sense.⁸⁴

Access to Presidential Decision Making

Betty Ford influenced her husband's thinking on a variety of issues and topics during his administration. Mrs. Ford said that she and her husband had always discussed the pros and cons of various issues, "and occasionally I did step in and say, 'You know, I don't believe it'll work that way.'"⁸⁵ She went on to say that when Gerald Ford was President, the couple would have extended dialogues and exchange ideas on a given topic: "Once he went back to the Oval Office and went into a cabinet meeting for a discussion and a decision, how much of what I said was carried back, I'll never know, but I think probably more than I suspect."⁸⁶

Mrs. Ford used "pillow talk" to advance her ideas.⁸⁷ When the President came home to the White House residential quarters, the First Lady might

regrets if he loses because I'm doing everything I can possibly do."¹⁵ His wife's efforts were rewarded when Jimmy Carter was elected, defeating Gerald Ford by a vote of 40,830,763 to 39,147,793.¹⁶

The White House was a bittersweet experience for the Carters. Mrs. Carter received plaudits for her work in mental health, but was sharply criticized for attending cabinet meetings and engaging in statecraft during a trip to Latin America. Her husband's presidency began with a sense of optimism but trouble began when he announced efforts to achieve a comprehensive national energy plan. Problems with staff members, the SALT (Strategic Arms Limitation Talks) II negotiations, the Panama Canal, and finally the Iranian hostage crisis limited the President's effectiveness and caused his popularity to plummet.

Jimmy Carter hoped to right numerous wrongs during a second administration. The Carter team, especially Rosalynn, campaigned even more vigorously in 1980 than in 1976 but to no avail. On Election Day the voters overwhelmingly rejected Jimmy Carter in favor of Republican Ronald Reagan. Never one to suppress her feelings, Mrs. Carter admitted that she was bitter about the defeat and wrote that the repudiation of Jimmy Carter by the American people "for whom he'd worked so hard and for whom he cared so much," was very hard to bear.¹⁷

Rosalynn Carter remains actively involved in a number of endeavors. She is a member of the boards of the Gannett Corporation, the Menninger Foundation, and Habitat for Humanity, which builds homes for the poor. She directs an annual Rosalynn Carter Symposium on Mental Health at the Carter Presidential Center, and organized a major conference, "Women and the Constitution," which was held in Atlanta in January 1988.¹⁸

MAJOR COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES OF THE FIRST LADY

Mrs. Carter told an interviewer: "I have learned that I have influence. I can look at a program and it gets some attention. . . . [I feel] I have a responsibility to do that."¹⁹

Rosalynn Carter was an extremely active communicator who took maximum advantage of the national podium afforded her to discuss the problems of mentally ill Americans, passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, and a host of other issues. Speeches, press conferences, interviews, articles authored by the First Lady, and continuous travel dramatized her commitment to these concerns.

In unprecedented actions the First Lady attended cabinet meetings, met with the President weekly for "working" lunches, and conducted substantive dialogues with Latin American leaders during a trip to that part of the globe. She was readily acknowledged as one of her husband's most influential advisors.²⁰

Rosalynn Carter, a woman referred to by her husband as a "perfect extension of myself," was a political surrogate, an independent advocate, and a skilled and effective public communicator.²¹

Advocacy

Perhaps no First Lady came to the White House as well prepared to undertake major projects as Rosalynn Carter. She had both the framework and the goals planned before her husband's term of office commenced.

Prior to Jimmy Carter's inauguration, members of Rosalynn Carter's staff interviewed members of Betty Ford's staff to ascertain how the First Lady's East Wing operation could be improved. Two of the findings of the report suggested that there had to be more cordial and productive relations between the East and West Wings, and that the First Lady's staff had to be streamlined for maximum effectiveness.²² The East Wing was subsequently reorganized to include five distinct divisions: projects and community liaison, press and research, schedule and advance, and social and personal.²³

In her autobiography, Mrs. Carter notes that she made only one promise during the 1976 presidential campaign: to study the nation's mental health needs.²⁴ She decided that it would be her primary project in the White House, but worried that it was not a glamorous issue and might be perceived as a typical lightweight First Lady's endeavor.

Her concerns were dispelled when her husband indicated that mental health was a priority in his administration by signing an executive order creating the President's Commission on Mental Health in February 1977.²⁵ Dr. Thomas E. Bryant was appointed chair, and Mrs. Carter was named honorary chair.

Though her position was honorary, there was never any question that Mrs. Carter intended to be intimately involved in the work of the commission. The first step in the commission's work was to hold public hearings, which the First Lady attended. Hundreds of people were interviewed, and almost a year was spent amassing data.

In an interview on the "Today Show" in September 1977, Mrs. Carter described the fact that there had not been an indepth study of mental health since 1960, that only a small percentage of Medicare and Medicaid funds were available for mental health, and that only 1/2 to 1 percent of the federal budget was devoted to research in the area.²⁶

In addition to commission testimony and television appearances, Mrs. Carter spoke about mental health to numerous audiences, including the Washington Press Club (September 1977) and the National Association of Retarded Citizens (November 1977).

The commission presented its report to the President on April 27, 1978. In appearances on "Good Morning America" and the "MacNeil-Lehrer Report" that day, the First Lady discussed the report's 117 recommendations. The commission had found that Americans were unserved, underserved, or inadequately served. In conclusion, the First Lady added, "We have to develop a national attitude of caring."²⁷

Mrs. Carter's involvement with mental health did not end here. She continued to speak to a variety of constituencies about the topic, and stayed current

terrified by the prospect of facing an audience that it made her physically ill.⁵⁷ Jimmy Carter suggested that she jot down a few key words that would remind her of what she wanted to say and then "just get up and talk about them."⁵⁸ This formula was especially successful for Mrs. Carter and she became a competent speaker.

Preparation of Texts

Mary Hoyt was Mrs. Carter's principal speech-writer, but the First Lady was also assisted by various members of her staff. Sometimes entire speeches were drafted for Mrs. Carter, and she merely made a few changes. This, however, was the exception. More often speeches were a combination of Mrs. Carter's ideas and phrasing, background material on the topic that had been prepared for her, and contributions from speechwriters. Hoyt complimented the First Lady: "She has very good instincts. . . . She has a great ability to simplify and to speak in a way that she is comfortable with and does seek to reach her audience."⁵⁹ At times Mrs. Carter would show her speech to the President for comment, but generally she served as her own editor.

Communication Style and Delivery

The First Lady probably delivered five hundred speeches during her time in the White House.⁶⁰ Hoyt points out that many presentations were remarks, short discourses that were ceremonial in nature. Remarks were more numerous than speeches because the First Lady always spoke to groups and organizations visiting the White House; frequently she would see seven or eight groups in a day.⁶¹

Rosalynn Carter was a competent communicator. She spoke clearly and deliberately, her voice soft and her accent Southern.⁶² (One critic uncharitably characterized Mrs. Carter's delivery as girlish and giggly.)⁶³ She spoke more effectively when her remarks were extemporaneous, and she was especially adept at this when she spoke about her husband, his goals as President, and her own projects.

The First Lady's speeches lacked humor, quotes, and anecdotes. She presented facts or opinions in a plain style, without embellishment. One observer noted, "It is not her style to loosen up an audience." He characterized her presentation as "icy."⁶⁴



Press Relations

Mary Finch Hoyt, Rosalynn Carter's press secretary, said that the role of the First Lady's press secretary "should be to try . . . to translate as accurately as possible the kind of person that person [the First Lady] is."⁶⁵ Ms. Hoyt attempted to do this for Mrs. Carter, but she achieved mixed results.

The First Lady was continuously frustrated by the fact that "her" stories did not merit front-page consideration and were either not covered at all or were relegated to the society pages. She told an interviewer that controversial topics were covered extensively by the media but that it was difficult to get headlines about mental health, the elderly, or the poor.⁶⁶ (UPI Correspondent Helen Thomas later responded to this charge by saying that the First Lady would have to *do* something that deserved to be featured on page one.)⁶⁷

Like other First Ladies, Mrs. Carter was bothered by the media's occasional inaccuracies and misperceptions.⁶⁸ She read and reacted to her press notices and those of the President. On one occasion she wrote to Presidential Press Secretary Jody Powell: "I think we should demand equal time with *New York Times* op. ed. articles. . . . I don't see how they can refuse."⁶⁹

Mrs. Carter did not hold press conferences. Hoyt said that the First Lady saw the press virtually every day and "there just didn't seem to be any call for it."⁷⁰ Mrs. Carter did meet periodically with out-of-town editors to answer questions and discuss her interests.⁷¹ On trips she always made herself available to the local press for comment and interviews.

As stories of her power grew, Mrs. Carter found herself to be a frequent target of press criticism. The criticism grew so vociferous that at one juncture Jody Powell, reacting to a particularly critical story about Mrs. Carter, wrote to one reporter: "You can . . . say anything you wish about the President, but cheap shots at the First Lady are out of bounds. You ought to be ashamed of yourself."⁷²

Rosalynn Carter's press relations were uneven. Some reporters felt that the First Lady's press office was at fault;⁷³ two persistent gripes were that Mary Hoyt "seemed oblivious to the needs or time constraints of news reporters" and that the press office had not sufficiently spread the word of the First Lady's substantive activities.⁷⁴ Mrs. Carter seemed to tolerate the press, but she did not give the impression that she liked reporters. There was an uneasy relationship between the two that appears to have been reflected in the inconsistent quality of the First Lady's relations with the fourth estate.

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCED THE FIRST LADY'S PERFORMANCE AS PUBLIC COMMENTATOR

Relationship with Her Husband

The Carters had and continue to have a loving, mutually supportive marriage. Jimmy Carter told a reporter that Rosalynn was his best friend,⁷⁵ and Mrs. Carter told an interviewer: "We do have a good relationship. . . . We have a mutual respect for each other and what the other is doing."⁷⁶

Theirs was a symbiotic relationship, but Rosalynn Carter pointed out that her life had never been submerged in Jimmy's.⁷⁷ Instead they enjoyed a genuine partnership, and Mrs. Carter said, "I've always been able to do the things that

are important to me and always helped Jimmy with the things that are important to him."⁷⁸

The Carters also seemed to be unabashedly affectionate. As he was greeting reporters, President Carter blurted out, "Hi, I miss my wife." (She had been away campaigning for two days.)⁷⁹ One writer commented that the Carters were an extremely close couple who often demonstrated "spontaneous displays of affection."⁸⁰

Their strong, symbiotic relationship was responsible for Rosalynn's activism in the White House. The President implicitly trusted his wife; he encouraged her and expected her to play a major role in his administration. The result was what some reporters labeled "the mom and pop presidency." Jimmy Carter was not threatened by Rosalynn's power; he used it as efficiently as possible. Both parties and many people in the United States benefitted from the arrangement.

Access to Presidential Decision Making

Veteran Washington observers Hugh Sidey of *Time* and Tom Wicker of the *New York Times* attested to Rosalynn Carter's influence in separate but similar articles. Sidey wrote: "The second most powerful person in the United States is Rosalynn Carter. There is virtually no dispute about that." Sidey goes on to quote a veteran White House staffer who said that Rosalynn had more impact on policy than any other President's wife in this generation.⁸¹ Wicker adds his endorsement: "Among the most influential voices in its [the Carter administration's] policy councils is Rosalynn Carter. She may be the most powerful First Lady since Edith Bolling Wilson virtually took over for a stricken President."⁸² Finally, in his memoirs, President Carter wrote, "She and I . . . discuss(ed) a full range of important issues and, aside from a few highly secret and sensitive matters, she knew all that was going on."⁸³

The Carters had always functioned as a team in business and in politics, and they continued this partnership in Washington. In a speech in 1979, Mrs. Carter said: "The President of the United States cares what I think. . . . I have influence. And I know it."⁸⁴ Mrs. Carter attended cabinet meetings,⁸⁵ although she never participated in discussions and only took notes.⁸⁶ The President and First Lady met every Tuesday, when possible, for regularly scheduled working lunches. These were not frivolous get-togethers but rather serious problem-solving sessions.

Mrs. Carter did not formulate policy. She counseled her husband on appointments,⁸⁷ and functioned as his speech critic and sounding board.⁸⁸ The First Lady was delegated to represent the United States in substantive talks with Latin American leaders and conducted an inspection tour of Cambodian refugee facilities. Many times she spoke as an official representative of the Carter administration.

The woman Jimmy Carter called "a very equal partner,"⁸⁹ was "the most powerful unelected public figure in the country."⁹⁰ Indeed, no First Lady has

CONCLUSIONS

There have been sweeping but not continuous changes in the role of the First Lady as public communicator from 1921 to 1989. A number of conclusions support this finding.

Since 1921, First Ladies have assumed one of three distinct stances as public communicators: social hostesses and ceremonial presences, emerging spokeswomen, or political surrogates and independent advocates. Relative to the three distinct communication stances has been the development, consciously or unconsciously, of three separate communication philosophies. The social hostesses and ceremonial presences devoted little if any thought to the idea of communicating with the public. The emerging spokeswomen were more aware of the need to share their ideas or projects with a national audience, and made limited use of the press and other media. The political surrogates and independent advocates utilized all available means of persuasion to dramatize their commitment to certain endeavors.

Patterns regarding both communication stance and philosophy are discernable. Social hostesses and ceremonial presences received little or no support from their husbands and generally had little input into presidential decision making. The First Ladies in this category received no encouragement to be involved public communicators, and they were publicly silent presences. The emerging spokeswomen received at least tepid endorsements from their husbands. Most of the husbands of emerging spokeswomen had favorable perceptions of women, and would allow their wives some access to decision making if they desired. The political surrogates and independent activists received unqualified support from their husbands. Moreover, their husbands had positive perceptions of women, appointed women to high-level positions within their administrations, and permitted their wives broad access to presidential decision making.

Three of the most active communicators, Eleanor Roosevelt, Lady Bird Johnson, and Betty Ford, came to the White House at times of national crises. While only Mrs. Roosevelt addressed the problems of the Depression, it would seem that crisis demands or encourages some response from the First Lady. It might be argued further that crisis creates a sympathetic environment in which the First Lady may deliver her remarks.

Expectations have changed over the years, and Americans seem to want an involved First Lady, ideally one with a record of concern for a given cause, who comes to the White House and proclaims her support for that cause or other projects. At the same time, the First Lady treads a narrow line. She may advocate feminine concerns or issues with little fear of condemnation. However, if she chooses to become involved in the more substantive issues of her husband's administration, or if she presents views on public policy that differ from those of her husband, she risks criticism that might ultimately hurt her husband's career. She might also damage her own credibility and personal popularity by taking publicly unpopular stands.

The changes in the First Lady's role as public communicator have not reflected changes in the status of women or shown corresponding growth. The First Lady has not historically reflected the time in which she inhabits the White House. Most women are middle-aged when they reach the executive mansion, and are not likely to embrace or endorse current trends in social history or thought (especially in the changing status of women). Most First Ladies reflect the social customs and habits of their upbringing.

Age, state of health, family obligations, the president's attitude toward the degree of his wife's participation in his administration, and the social and historical context of the time are all determinants of how active a woman will be as a public communicator in the White House. The working relationship between the President and First Lady is also a critical factor in determining how active a woman will be as a public communicator.

The press plays a critical role in transmitting both the image and the substance of a First Lady. In 1971, Norma Foreman found that a double standard existed between male and female reporters covering the White House. The men were covering the President and producing "hard news" while many newspapers relegated female reporters' coverage of the First Lady's efforts to the society or women's page. Female reporters were still striving to legitimize their coverage of the First Lady and their presence in the White House press office. Foreman concluded that "a First Lady who generates substantive news about public issues and provides newswomen open access is likely to receive a bonus of gratitude from the newswomen for what they view as an opportunity to increase their prestige."¹

Parity between male and female White House reporters has changed since 1971, but inequality still exists. The implication of this finding is that First Ladies who generate news and are active public communicators are almost guaranteed more favorable press treatment than their less active counterparts.

In addition, national interest in the First Family and a more energetic and curious media have made it virtually impossible for a First Lady to remain incommunicado in the White House.

James David Barber has suggested that presidential performance can be predicted by analyzing a man's character, worldview (consisting of "his primary, politically relevant beliefs, particularly his conceptions of social causality, human nature and the central moral conflicts of the time"),² style ("the president's habitual ways of performing his three political roles: rhetoric, personal relations and homework"),³ the power situation, and a climate of expectations (the President must alternately reassure, project a sense of action, and lend legitimacy to the presidency).⁴ While the differences between the presidency and the role of First Lady brook almost no comparison, three of Barber's five elements provide a schema for predicting how a First Lady might function as a communicator in the White House.

One of the findings of this study supported the belief that age, state of health, relationship with husband, and similar factors were important in determining how active a woman might be as a communicator. These factors are subsets of character. What is a woman likely to do in the White House based on her overall behavior? Is she enthusiastic, reticent, or aggressive? If we can identify these traits, can we argue that they will surface in behavior in the White House? Few women—indeed, few people—change their behavior or major character traits when they arrive at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

Recent history suggests that the wife of a President will have already been a political wife for many years. This woman will have a developed worldview, especially primary, relevant political beliefs and opinions about the central moral dilemmas of the time. She may well have political beliefs as strongly held and supported as those of her husband, and could come to the White House identified as an enthusiastic Republican or simply a woman who embraces her husband's beliefs. By analyzing this pre-White House activity, we might derive some sense of how much political communication might emanate from the First Lady. Furthermore, what does the First Lady identify as the central moral dilemmas of the time, and will she enter the fray?

The First Lady will have developed an observable style prior to residence in the White House. She will have performed the visible and expected tasks of hostess and public relations person for her husband, and she may have been a political presence or surrogate for him. Her preference for one or both of these roles may suggest whether the First Lady will view her White House role in ceremonial terms or become a well-defined person in her own right.

There is no absolutely accurate method for predicting how a First Lady will function as a communicator in the White House, but by assessing character, worldview, and style we might begin to see a pattern of potential activity or nonactivity emerging.

Future First Ladies will feel greater media and public pressure to assume a more visible and committed communication presence. Those who choose to be

political surrogates and independent advocates (within the accepted parameters of feminine issues) probably will be accorded more favorable press attention and public support and admiration than those who remain inactive.

The First Lady has one of the most influential podiums in the world at her disposal. No First Lady has ever used that podium for personal gain or to questionable ends. Some have chosen to ignore it or make limited use of it. The political surrogates or independent advocates have taught us that the podium provides a magnificent instrument for educating, persuading, and ultimately improving the lot of "all the people."

NOTES

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Modern First Ladies in Historical Perspective

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Writing about Mrs. Lou Henry Hoover in 1929, Mary Roberts Rinehart, the novelist, observed that "the public interest in the lives and duties of our First Ladies is equaled only by the general ignorance of their lives and a misapprehension of their duties and special privileges." Envious of presidential wives, she went on, "we are constantly attempting to pierce the veil of mystery that quite unintentionally surrounds them."¹ The growing scholarly interest in First Ladies indicates that Rinehart's remark is still valid. After too long a neglect and no little mystery, students of the presidency and of women's history are recognizing that looking at First Ladies can offer insights and perspectives on many aspects of American history and society.²

As research proceeds, important historical continuities and precedents for modern First Lady activities regularly come to light. When comparisons are made among the redecorating and cultural plans of contemporary First Ladies, very few observers recognize that these concerns go back at least to the early years of this century. Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt, Mrs. William Howard Taft, and the two Mrs. Woodrow Wilsons started the tradition of musicales, with the appearances of artists arranged through the Steinway Piano Company.³ Mrs. Grace Coolidge invited Sergei Rachmaninoff to play at the White House three times by 1927. Other artistic events of Mrs. Coolidge included Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks, Sr., Ethel Barrymore, and John McCormack.⁴ A determined but unsuccessful effort to have Liberace appear at the White House to play for the Trumans in the early 1950s is documented in the Social Office papers of Mrs. Bess Truman.⁵

Previous First Ladies also pursued redecorating and refurbishing campaigns for the White House. Mrs. Coolidge attempted to collect period furniture for the mansion when she found few original pieces there. "I searched the attic and the storehouse to little avail," she recalled, and then secured a resolution from Congress making a public appeal for historic treasures.⁶ Mrs. Hoover sought out antiques and had reproductions made of James Monroe furniture from originals at the Monroe Shrine in Fredericksburg, Virginia. A continuing problem of money held back these restoration efforts as Congress did not appropriate much for the First Family on a regular basis.⁷

Historical study is also disclosing the variety of ways in which First Ladies affected their husbands while in office. Edith Kermit Roosevelt, according to her stepdaughter, Alice Roosevelt Longworth, took daily walks with Theodore in the White House gardens, where she had "a very calming influence on him."⁸ Mrs. William Howard

Taft was directly consulted about her husband's Cabinet, and said of one candidate: "I could not believe you to be serious when you mentioned that man's name. He is perfectly awful and his family are even worse."⁹

One of the least recognized First Ladies in this regard was Bess Wallace Truman. Generally regarded as a retiring contrast to Eleanor Roosevelt, she declined to continue Mrs. Roosevelt's weekly press conferences for women reporters, and told a friend she wasn't going down in any coal mines.¹⁰ Publicly she placed the emphasis on the helpmate side of her relationship. But the President called her "The Boss," and as a Democratic party activist, India Edwards, wrote in her memoirs, "'The Boss' was a good name for Bess Wallace Truman. Harry S. Truman consulted her about small and great matters. . . ." In the evenings the President brought papers upstairs to talk over with her.¹¹ As Chief Usher James B. West put it, she probably had "more influence on political decisions than Mrs. Roosevelt had on social issues." Her letters indicate that Mrs. Truman had some interesting political opinions. "What's going to happen to the poor old Democratic Committee?" she wrote a friend in February 1970, "It sounds sort of hopeless to us out here and out of touch."¹²

Lou Henry Hoover is another neglected and overshadowed First Lady. A trained scientist, a sponsor of the Girl Scouts, and perhaps the best educated presidential wife, she delivered a radio address on behalf of her husband's relief program in 1931. The recent opening of her papers may bring her into better focus.¹³ But Mrs. Hoover's contributions have, of course, receded into obscurity because of the impact of Eleanor Roosevelt on the institution. In her twelve years in the White House, Mrs. Roosevelt established a new, activist model for presidential wives which she carried on into a political career in her own right after her husband's death in 1945.

Historians, biographers, and journalists are still trying to establish the exact scope of Mrs. Roosevelt's effect on American history. Like her uncle Theodore, whose behavior she mirrored in many ways, she is not easily categorized. A recent book of essays about her touches on such issues as youth, race relations, feminism, and world peace.¹⁴ She accomplished so much because of her energy and personal commitment. As her friend Molly Dewson wrote: "If Mrs. Roosevelt did not hit two birds with every one stone, she never could have carried out her schedule."¹⁵

Her schedule included regular weekly press conferences for women reporters in Washington from which men were excluded. She championed the cause of residents of Appalachia, Black Americans before Civil Rights became fashionable, and women in and out of the Democratic party in a male-dominated government. She became a kind of ombudswoman to the nation who could respond when a couple in Skidmore, Texas in 1936 needed hospital care for a baby with a punctured lung. After the infant died the First Lady saw to it that money was provided to the destitute couple for the baby's funeral.¹⁶ As Mrs. Lyndon Johnson said of her in 1964, "She was never afraid to speak up against wrong, no matter how many brickbats it brought down on her head."¹⁷

A period of relative calm in First Lady activism followed Mrs. Roosevelt's tenure. Mrs. Truman exercised her influence out of the public view, and Mrs. Mamie Eisenhower, as her son put it, "felt her role was to push" her husband forward "and to

give him all the emotional support he needed, although they would never talk about his business at home."¹⁸ Between 1961 and 1963, Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy made the White House a center of fashion, culture, and historical restoration. She did so by her example and not as an active advocate of the goals she pursued. Interest in the First Lady reemerged in the early 1960s, however, as the public came to see a presidential wife as a potential patroness of the arts and symbol of elegance and sophistication.¹⁹

Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson entered the White House in November 1963 with college training in history and journalism, experience in operating a radio and television station in Austin, rich political knowledge gained from an involvement in her husband's campaigns, and an activist energy akin to Mrs. Roosevelt's. "How does she do it all?" one of her friends asked Mrs. Clark Clifford. "Don't you know?" came the reply. "Lady Bird has pigeon holes in her mind that open and close at her will. That's why she never forgets anyone or overlooks anything."²⁰ Getting settled in the White House, helping the president's election effort in 1964, and finding a focus for her diverse interests consumed the first year as First Lady. There were, however, hints of what was to come. On April 20, 1964, she told the Young Women's Christian Association's national convention that a good home environment for children "encompasses a really massive attack on the part of city-dwellers to demand long-range, imaginative efforts to make our cities clean, functional and beautiful."²¹

Following the election, Mrs. Johnson considered more specifically what programs she might sponsor as First Lady. On a campaign trip with Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall earlier in the summer, she found a common interest in conservation issues, and these talks resumed at the Johnson Ranch in November 1964. At the same time friends in Washington, D.C. and New York—Elizabeth Rowe, Katie Louchheim, and Mary Lasker, were telling her "to extend your interest in the White House's beauty to the whole city."²² A concern with the quality of the environment came naturally to Mrs. Johnson. Since childhood, she had responded to nature—"things," as she said, "like walking through the piney woods of East Texas listening to the wind sighing, or along the banks of Caddo Lake with the gnarled cypress trees heavy with moss, and well, the whole beautification picture of our diverse country. . . ."²³

In February 1965 the announcement of her formation of the First Lady's Committee for a More Beautiful National Capital and her interview in *U.S. News and World Report* tapped a latent public interest in the appearance of the American landscape. Presidential concern, expressed in a message to Congress about Natural Beauty, lent the direct weight of the administration to Mrs. Johnson's cause. In May 1965 a White House conference on Natural Beauty heard the First Lady assail ugliness as a problem which "every man and woman and child can attack and contribute to defeating."²⁴

Mrs. Johnson's recently opened beautification files reveal how wide a range of environmental talents and experts she drew on between 1965 and 1969. From the appearance of service stations to the location of freeways, from the California redwoods to the placing of parks and the improvement of schoolyards in Washington, her activism enlisted Walter Washington, future mayor of the Capitol City, Wolf Von Eckardt, Lawrence Halprin, Laurence Rockefeller, a host of Cabinet and senatorial wives as speakers, and innumerable private citizens who wanted to make their com-

munities better and help her.²⁵ Mrs. Johnson became a public advocate for beauty, catalyst for urban change in Washington itself, and legislative liaison in efforts to pass and implement highway beautification measures.

In the summer and fall of 1965, for example, she sat in on strategy conferences, called personally swing votes in Congress, and rallied groups that favored the Highway Beautification Act. Her energetic staff, Bess Abell, Sharon Francis, and especially Liz Carpenter, carried the word still further. Liz reported on October 4, 1965 how "I put on my best Joy perfume and tightest girdle" to call on two wavering Texas lawmakers as the key vote approached.²⁶ A Bill Mauldin cartoon at the time showed a roadway festooned with billboards, one of which read: "Impeach Lady Bird."²⁷ Presidential support, congressional desire to do something for Mrs. Johnson, and the merits of the bill led to success in October 1965. "Lady Bird scored a notable victory," wrote a member of the Pennsylvania Roadside Council.²⁸

At the time people recognized that Mrs. Johnson was creating new possibilities for a First Lady. In historical perspective her contributions to the activist tradition approach those of Mrs. Roosevelt, and explain why she ranked third, among all First Ladies, behind only Eleanor Roosevelt and Abigail Adams, in a recent poll of historians and other scholars. Working directly on legislation, rallying grassroots backing for bills and later administrative decisions, and serving as the visible embodiment of a national policy, Lady Bird Johnson demonstrated that a First Lady could now do more than serve as a feminine conscience or fact-finder of a presidency. It was now conceivable that she could be a functional and integral part of the office itself.³⁰

Five and a half years later, in August 1974, Mrs. Betty Ford became First Lady under abrupt and unique circumstances.³¹ The resignation of President Richard M. Nixon and his departure for the West Coast with Mrs. Nixon deprived Mrs. Ford of any kind of orderly transition to her new responsibilities. In addition the brief duration of the Ford Presidency itself allowed her much less time to develop her own style and priorities as the president's wife. Yet in her two and a half years in the White House, Betty Ford was able to take her place among modern examples of First Lady activism. During a period of rising popular debate about the place and role of women in American society, Mrs. Ford spoke out for her conception of what the scope of feminine participation should be. "I tried to be honest; I tried not to dodge subjects I felt the people had a right to know where I stood."³²

Among the things she stood for were the Equal Rights Amendment, the 1973 Supreme Court decision on abortion, and more women in public life and high government office. "In a year when women are continuing their climb into public visibility," *Newsweek* commented in December 1975, "Betty Ford seems the symbolic woman of the year."³³ She wrote state legislators on behalf of ERA and lobbied with others over the telephone. "I realize you're under a lot of pressure with the voters today," she said to a Missouri lawmaker, "but I'm just calling to let you know that the President and I are considerably interested." Opposing groups picketed the White House and she responded: "I'm the first First Lady ever to have a march organized against her."³⁴

Controversy surrounded her as it had few First Ladies since Mrs. Roosevelt. When she commented on 60 Minutes about a possible response to a hypothetical love affair

of her daughter, one clergyman felt compelled to denounce "a gutter type of mentality." Another told the press that he favored "chastity before marriage and fidelity after marriage."³⁵ The *National Review* accused her of rewriting "the Ten Commandments over nationwide TV."³⁶ In Washington seven women dressed in black appeared on television and said in unlikely chorus: "Betty Ford will be remembered as the unelected First Lady who pressured second-rate manhood on American women."³⁷

Despite these criticisms, Mrs. Ford emerged within a year of becoming First Lady, according to pollster Lou Harris, as "one of the most popular wives of a President to occupy the White House."³⁸ Candor and openness struck an approving chord in the American public. "At last, a real First Lady!" said one positive telegram to the White House.³⁹ Mrs. Ford was unabashedly human in her reactions to being First Lady. "One of the most refreshing things about her," concluded CBS newsman Robert Pierpoint, "was her determination to be her own person."⁴⁰ That the experience was occasionally difficult for her then and later was clear. Major surgery, two assassination attempts on her husband, and a narrow defeat in a presidential election would have tested anyone's resilience. But she displayed the same qualities that she recently conveyed to an interviewer: "I enjoy the moment for the moment, take everything out of what I'm doing one step at a time, and when it's gone I will have lived that time to the fullest."⁴¹ Her legacy to the institution will likely be more in her example than in the success or failure of the causes she championed. When historians ranked her sixth among all First Ladies in early 1983, they testified to the impact of her character and personality in stretching the range of questions within which the president's wife could make a substantial difference.

"Jimmy and I were always partners," Mrs. Rosalynn Carter told a reporter in 1983, and it was her visible role as surrogate, confidant, and joint policymaker that added a further dimension to the participation of the First Lady in the presidency. The roots of the Carters's political partnership went back to the operation of the family peanut business in Plains, and the connection was strengthened during the Georgia governorship and in the race for the White House in 1976. Just as Harry and Bess Truman had talked over issues thirty years before, the Carters, as she recalls it, "sat in the rocking chairs on the Truman Balcony, just as we did at the governor's mansion at 4:30 every afternoon, and we talked."⁴²

Unlike the Trumans, however, the Carters made their close working relationship a highly public matter. "It was only natural," President Carter has written, "that when we arrived in Washington she would pursue these kinds of activities, acting on many ceremonial occasions as my surrogate."⁴³ Mrs. Carter sat in on Cabinet meetings, at her husband's express invitation. "The Cabinet meetings were a great help to me," she writes in her memoirs, and she "never considered" not attending them because of press criticism. She resisted what she calls the "not very subtle implication that Cabinet meetings were no place for a wife."⁴⁴ She also attended strategy sessions at Camp David, advised on appointments, and served as an official emissary of the President overseas. In her first two years as First Lady, she made 248 speeches or public comments, gave 154 press interviews, attended 641 briefings, and visited 36 foreign

countries. By 1979 *Newsweek* called her "the most influential First Lady of modern times."⁴⁵

Proximity to the President also facilitated the substantive objectives of Mrs. Carter's time in Washington. As she prepared to become First Lady in late 1976, she was told that her ability "to influence public policy is now dramatic." A supporter of the Equal Rights Amendment and an advocate of the rights of the elderly, she concentrated the bulk of her attention in the policy area on improved care for the mentally ill. Sensitized to the problems of mental health in their Georgia campaigns, she chaired a gubernatorial commission for the Mentally and Emotionally Handicapped. She came to the White House in 1977 with the belief that "If we don't care for the mentally ill, we're not likely to care about the people whose problems are less severe."⁴⁷ Mrs. Carter became the honorary chair of the President's Commission on Mental Health and testified before a Senate Subcommittee considering mental health legislation, the first First Lady to appear before a congressional panel since Eleanor Roosevelt.⁴⁸ Her work culminated in the Mental Health Systems Act of 1980, and she was ranked fifth among all First Ladies in the 1983 poll.

"I loved being in the White house," Mrs. Carter has said, "I felt as if I could do something for people." Her service as First Lady, as a presidential surrogate, posed in a direct way the perennial issue of what the American people want the wife of a president to do and to be. Reporters still address the issue of whether a First Lady, about whom the voters do not have a choice, should be an active part of a presidential administration. To questions about whether First Ladies should be paid, Mrs. Carter says simply: "I was on the stage as much as Jimmy was."⁴⁹ Beyond actually being president, or having the institution of First Lady formalized into the function of the office, Mrs. Carter took the role of surrogate, partner, and advocate to the full limits of its capacity in our system of government.

This brief review of the contributions of these three First Ladies reveals that the nation has been fortunate to have had such talented and dedicated persons occupying this institution. The variety and interest of these women as personalities in their own right is also most impressive. Historians have understandably treated the presidency as a men's locker room. There is some truth in that perspective, but also much distortion. We know enough about the development of human beings over a life span to recognize that marriage is an evolving, growing relationship. By ignoring First Ladies, we have truncated the humanity of presidents and diminished them as men. Our grasp of the presidency is poorer for that action.

But we also have, and this is more important, downgraded a group of women who have fulfilled a unique responsibility. It is too simple to say that their role has been symbolic. It has been wisely said that we live by symbols. How we view the First Lady is how we expect women to act, marriages to work, families to grow, and Americans to live. In the most profound sense, the study of First Ladies holds up a mirror to ourselves. And for this male historian, it has also shown the unstated and often unconscious chauvinism about the achievements of women that permeates our society. Seeing a woman, a First Lady, only in terms of the man she married reduces her individuality and diminishes her as well. History and circumstances make it neces-

sary to evaluate First Ladies as helpmates, appendages, surrogates, and partners of the presidents, but these categories should not be barriers to seeing presidential wives for what they were and are—autonomous human beings with as much claim to the attention of the student of our history as their masculine counterparts. We will only understand the past of our presidents and ourselves most fully when we grasp it in all its richness. A history that excludes First Ladies, or the contribution and lives of women generally, will be a record that is limited, false and wrong.

* This essay was originally delivered as the keynote address at a conference on First Ladies at the Gerald R. Ford Museum in Grand Rapids, Michigan on April 19, 1984. I am indebted to Don Wilson, the Director of the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, for asking me to take part in the conference, and to Will Jones, the Curator of the Ford Museum, for the hospitality and kindness he and his staff accorded me. I owe thanks as well to Mrs. Betty Ford and Mrs. Rosalynn Carter for their gracious cooperation during the proceedings of the conference. Craig H. Roell helped prepare the manuscript for publication.

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29. Douglas Lonnstrom, "Results of First Ladies Poll," Siena College, 1982, author's copy. All subsequent references will be to this document. The ratings quoted are not, in my judgment, to be used as assessing the relative merits of the First Ladies discussed in this essay. They illustrate instead the high regard in which historians and others have held Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Ford, and Mrs. Carter.
30. For other scholarly writings on Mrs. Johnson, see Norma Ruth Holly Foreman, "The First Lady as a Leader of Public Opinion: A Study of the Role and Press Relations of Lady Bird Johnson," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 1971), and Thomas E. Redard, "The Politics of Beautification in the Johnson Administration," (M.A. thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 1976).
31. Because of the nature of the occasion at the Ford Museum, especially the time constraints, it was not possible to address the record of Mrs. Richard Nixon as First Lady. Her tenure in the White House was as interesting, varied, and deserving of scrutiny as that of any other recent First Lady. Aspects of her performance in that role are discussed in Lester David, *The Lonely Lady of Saugerties: The Story of Pat Nixon* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1978), pp. 127-185, and Richard Nixon, *RN, the Memoirs of Richard Nixon* (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1978), pp. 533-540.
32. Betty Ford, with Chris Chase, *The Times of My Life* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), p. 205.
33. "Woman of the Year," *Newsweek*, November 29, 1975, p. 19.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 22; Sheila Rabb Weidenfeld, *First Lady's Lady: With the Fords at the White House* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1979), pp. 86-87.
35. "On Being Normal," *Time*, August 25, 1975, p. 15.
36. "Betty Ford Gaffe," *National Review*, August 29, 1975, p. 1008.
37. "A Fighting First Lady," *Time*, March 3, 1975, p. 20.
38. "Votes for the First Lady," U.S., House of Representatives, *Congressional Record* (November 14, 1975), p. 36645.
39. "On Being Normal," p. 15.
40. Robert Pierpoint, *At the White House* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1981), p. 188.

41. Barbara Goldsmith, "One Step at a Time," *Parade*, May 1, 1983, p. 7.
42. "Mrs. Carter Speaks Out," *The New York Times*, July 14, 1983.
43. Jimmy Carter, *Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President* (New York: Bantam Books, 1982), p. 32.
44. Rosalynn Carter, *First Lady From Plains* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984), p. 175. Mrs. Carter kindly made portions of her memoirs available to me in time for inclusion in this essay. I am grateful to her and her associate, Madeline MacBean, for this courtesy.
45. Betty Glad, *Jimmy Carter in Search of the Great White House* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1980), p. 453; "The President's Partner," *Newsweek*, November 5, 1979, p. 36.
46. Bertram S. Brown, "First Lady Initiatives," December 1976, p. 2; a paper prepared for Mrs. Carter, copy kindly furnished to the author by Dr. Brown.
47. Mary Gail Miesch, "Rosalynn Carter: An Issue-Oriented First Lady," December 1982, seminar paper, p. 8, University of Texas at Austin, author's copy.
48. *Ibid.*, pp. 15, 21.
49. "Mrs. Carter Speaks Out," *The New York Times*, July 14, 1983.

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Modern First Ladies and the Presidency

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The institution of the First Lady was recently described as an "expensive folly" that is "wholly offensive to the taxpayers." The indignation that this letter to *The Washington Post* expressed seems to represent a minority view about where the wife of the President stands with the nation. Books and articles regarding former First Ladies come out steadily and find a receptive audience. A fascination with Barbara Bush permeates American advertising, and the First Lady's poll ratings often exceed those of her husband. Fascination with presidential wives is an indelible aspect of the national culture.¹

How to relate these women to the study of the presidency has been less easy to resolve. The large body of scholarly literature on the occupants of the White House pays relatively little attention to their wives except in passing. As a result, most writing about the First Ladies has tended to be anecdotal and impressionistic. There are a number of useful memoirs and interesting biographies of individual First Ladies, but the books published before 1980 about these women as a group did not have much intellectual rigor. Nor did such overview studies as there were rest on original sources or attempt to place presidential wives in a broader context of the history of American women.²

The past ten years have been a period when scholarship about First Ladies has moved beyond their initial efforts and pursued a greater intellectual and analytic sophistication. A variety of forces contributed to this constructive trend. During the early 1980s there were conferences about the history of First Ladies. The most notable of these was the one that Betty Ford held at the Gerald R. Ford Museum in Grand Rapids, Michigan in April 1984. The discussion of First Ladies and First Families that occurred there focused national attention on the institution and revealed some of the possibilities that serious study might develop. The political controversies that surrounded Nancy Reagan also promoted debate about the limits of the influence that a First Lady should exercise.³

Most significant in a scholarly context, however, was the emergence of a body of primary source material about these women that had not been previously available. As the presidential libraries began to open their holdings on the wife of each president, it became apparent that these White House Social Files were a storehouse of fresh and important information. They contained in some instances thousands of boxes of letters, memoranda, and other documents of crucial importance for the historical impact of the First Lady. For the first time, it became possible to examine the historical

record for presidential wives in as much detail as had always been true for the chief executives themselves.

Out of the research that ensued have already come some important historical works. Betty Boyd Caroli's *First Ladies* (1987) provides an informed and thoughtful treatment of all the First Ladies in their public and private capacities. Caroli's aim is to trace how the role of the president's wife has been "transformed from ceremonial backdrop to substantive world figure." The book is one that all First Lady scholars will want to read and profit from as they continue their research. Myra G. Gutin's recent book on *The President's Partner: The First Lady in the Twentieth Century* (1989) looks closely at "the First Ladies perception of their responsibilities as communicators" and evaluates "the impact of their actions." The book draws skillfully on the rich materials that are now available in presidential repositories. Finally, Mary C. Ryan and Nancy Kegan Smith, *Modern First Ladies: Their Documentary Legacy* (1989) provides a reliable, brief introduction to the work of these women and the research resources available for a study of their careers.⁴

As the essays in this issue indicate, however, the serious study of First Ladies is a danger of running out of fruitful topics. Because of the extent of the manuscript sources in and out of presidential libraries, scholars can now trace the personal relationships of First Ladies with prominent and obscure Americans, examine their pursuit of diverse social causes, and trace their involvement in controversies in exciting detail. Few aspects of the history of women in the United States in this century are better documented than the role of the First Lady, and students of women's history will find the lives of the First Ladies a significant new resource for their important field.⁵

With regard to the presidency itself, the capacity to understand the place of the First Lady will enhance knowledge about how the nation's Chief Executives have operated. The way in which a president uses or manages the political and cultural assets that a First Lady provides says a great deal about the style and impact of an administration. If there are no innocent acts during a term in the White House, it is because presidents send messages regarding family values and their own emotional priorities in how they treat their wife, their children, and their relatives. The contrasting popular perceptions about the marriages and families of Presidents Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, and George Bush, for example, says a great deal about the political effect of the elusive issue of "values" during the 1970s and 1980s. One point that the study of First Ladies underscores is the need to scrutinize presidential decision-making about intimate family matters with the same sense of sophistication and nuance that has been devoted to issues of foreign and economic policy.⁶

Each of the essays that follow contributes to this more thoughtful appraisal of First Ladies and their place in the history of the presidency. Even such a comparatively neglected figure as Lou Henry Hoover proves to be an historical actor of unexpected complexity. Mrs. Hoover's interest in women's athletics and the Girl Scouts has been recognized in a general way for some years. With fresh access to the records about her at the Hoover Library that Dale Mayer has surveyed, it is possible to see her as the champion of a brand of conservative feminism during the 1920s that merits additional inquiry.

Though she was overshadowed by Eleanor Roosevelt, Lou Hoover was an innovator while she was the First Lady. She gave formal speeches in her position, and was the first wife of a president to make addresses over the radio. In such remarks she supported her husband's policies toward the Depression through comments about how women could assist in relief efforts.⁷ Because of her retiring nature and the political difficulties that her husband encountered, Mrs. Hoover's relations with the press were often difficult. As a result her historical standing has suffered because of a lack of documentation about her causes. With the opening of her papers, Lou Henry Hoover could emerge as one of the more interesting and thoughtful First Ladies of the century.

Eleanor Roosevelt has not suffered from any neglect of her activities as First Lady over the past six decades. Only Jacqueline Kennedy rivals her for sheer fame among these women. The ready availability of Mrs. Roosevelt's papers at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library since the early 1970s, and now their appearance in a microfilm edition for the 1933-1945 period, has attracted a number of biographers to her. Joseph P. Lash's important study *Eleanor and Franklin* (1971) revealed some of the depths of Mrs. Roosevelt's personal life. Other discoveries during the late 1970s about her intimate friendship with Lorena Hickok added to the fascination inherent in her life. Documentary materials about her pour out from relatives, friends, and associates.⁸

Despite the extensive writing that has occurred about Eleanor Roosevelt, there remains more to be said. As Frances Seeber demonstrates, the First Lady's network of female friendships was a significant part of Washington life during the 1930s. Inside the government and the Democratic party, such women as Molly Dewson, Frances Perkins, and Ellen Woodyard drew their inspiration and support from Eleanor Roosevelt. Susan Ware, Martha Swain, and others have done important work in tracing these patterns of influence, but Seeber's essay emphasizes that close examination of Mrs. Roosevelt's commitments to her female colleagues will yield informative insights.⁹

The April 1939 concert of Marian Anderson at the Lincoln Memorial was a pivotal occasion in the emergence of Eleanor Roosevelt as a champion of the cause of racial justice during the New Deal. The First Lady resigned her membership in the Daughters of the American Revolution to protest that organization's refusal to allow Anderson to sing at Constitution Hall in Washington because of her race. Allida M. Black traces the intricate strategy that Mrs. Roosevelt followed in shaping her public position in this episode. Black's analysis reveals that a careful examination of Mrs. Roosevelt's evolving position on civil rights would be a most productive research topic. In many respects, Mrs. Roosevelt's identification with civil rights and the cause of African Americans gained votes for the Democrats among blacks in the North on the one hand and on the other contributed to the emerging resistance to the New Deal among white southerners. A full-length exploration of Eleanor Roosevelt's impact on the Democratic party would be an important addition to the historical literature on 20th century politics.¹⁰

The two First Ladies who followed Eleanor Roosevelt were less activist and less visible during their White House service. The historical documents on Bess Truman and Mamie Eisenhower lack the scope and variety that characterized Mrs. Roosevelt's correspondence and influence. In the case of both women, however, their efforts to

separate themselves from Eleanor Roosevelt's example and to deflect press interest in their views are well developed in the records in their husband's presidential library. Examination of the manuscripts of these two transitional First Ladies will likely lift them out of the historical shadows.¹¹

No such process is necessary in the case of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis. Nearly three decades after her husband's death, she remains the most famous of all First Ladies. It is sad that popular accounts of her years as First Lady have stressed the sensational and the salacious. Her Social Office Files are voluminous and appear to contain much that will be of interest to serious students of modern First Ladies. After being used for what was an "official" study of her White House years, the Social Files were closed until the 1980s when a persistent biographer secured some access to them. As the fourteen hundred boxes are reviewed and opened, a more balanced and measured portrayal of Mrs. Kennedy's contributions is likely to emerge.¹²

Lady Bird Johnson was an activist First Lady in the tradition of Eleanor Roosevelt, and the many facets of her public career are well documented in the large collection of papers at the Lyndon B. Johnson Library. Nancy Smith's familiarity with these materials reveals how much information the future biographers of Mrs. Johnson will find in the Social Office files and oral histories in Austin. Since her career after the Johnson presidency has been one of the longest and most active of recent First Ladies, Mrs. Johnson's personal papers will in due course indicate how she has extended and elaborated the priorities of her White House campaigns for beautification of the environment. The continuity between what she did during the 1960s and the National Wildflower Research Center during the 1980s is an important aspect of her leadership among women conservationists during this century.¹³

The most intense public controversy of Mrs. Johnson's tenure as First Lady was the famous encounter with the African-American singer, Eartha Kitt, at a White House luncheon in January 1968. Although the episode is often mentioned in accounts of Miss Kitt's entertainment career, no one before Janet Mezzack has used the Social Files to trace how the incident occurred and what the private and public response to it was in 1968. The luncheon symbolized the tensions that split American society during that turbulent year, but it was not the simple melodrama that journalists at the time depicted. Like Allida Black's essay on Eleanor Roosevelt, Janet Mezzack's examination of a single moment in Lady Bird Johnson's life underscores the extent to which studying First Ladies in this way can provide a snapshot of the nation at a moment of pain and change.

Although a presidential library has now opened for former president Richard M. Nixon, it is unlikely that scholars will have access to Mrs. Pat Nixon's Social Files in the near future. With the Nixon Presidential Papers Project still involved with Watergate-related issues, it may be years before Mrs. Nixon's records are available to the same extent as for other First Ladies. As a result, Mrs. Nixon may be neglected and unstudied for some time, as was Lou Henry Hoover. Given the role that she played in redecorating the White House during the early 1970s, and the trip she made on behalf of her husband, Mrs. Nixon's career as First Lady merits closer scrutiny. A

judicious assessment of her impact on the institution would be possible if her papers were made available as rapidly as is feasible.¹⁴

The three First Ladies who came after Pat Nixon returned the institution to the public visibility and celebrity that had characterized the performance of Eleanor Roosevelt and Lady Bird Johnson. During only two and a half years, Betty Ford became identified with a commitment to feminist concerns such as the Equal Rights Amendment that ran counter to the conservatism of the Ford administration itself. Leesa Tobin's essay suggests that Mrs. Ford's Social Files will provide abundant evidence for a more subtle portrait of the First Lady's record between 1974 and 1977. The personal and medical difficulties with which Mrs. Ford battled in the White House are a revealing lesson about the strains that accompany the notoriety that surrounds a First Lady.

Rosalynn Carter came to Washington with an ambitious agenda of causes to pursue and influence with the president she hoped to exercise. In addition, her impact on the institutional framework of the First Lady was significant as she sought to build a staff that could sustain her initiatives. As Faye Jensen shows, Mrs. Carter encountered the powerful constraints that circumscribed what an activist woman could do during the late 1970s, and her capacity to champion mental health reform and other projects suffered as her husband's political base eroded. Because her records will become open more quickly than for other recent First Ladies, Rosalynn Carter is likely to be more written about than Nancy Reagan or Barbara Bush. The success of Jimmy Carter's post-presidency will probably also contribute to a positive appraisal of his wife's record.

Nancy Reagan's conservative approach to such issues as drug abuse and the ways in which she influenced her husband made her the most controversial First Lady since Eleanor Roosevelt. James G. Benze, Jr. discusses the ways in which Mrs. Reagan's standing with the American public fluctuated during the 1980s. How much of her program reflected sincere commitment and how much grew out of adroit management from a White House attuned to media issues will be revealed more fully when her papers are available. The frosty reception that met her memoir, *My Turn*, in 1989 indicates that Mrs. Reagan's historical reputation starts at a comparatively low level.¹⁵ Like her husband, she also has had problems with the post-presidential phase which may further contribute to a negative assessment of her performance as First Lady in the short run. Given the length of time that she served as First Lady and the extensive paper record that was generated during those eight years, Nancy Reagan will never lose interest because of the intense public debate that followed her from the moment that Ronald Reagan was elected to the presidency.

The study of the First Lady as an institution presents fascinating opportunities during the last decade of this century. In the individual states, the role of the spouse of the governor has begun to receive serious attention. A program such as the Gubernatorial Spouses Seminar, now entering its sixth year, provides a means for these influential women and men to exchange ideas about their roles in the laboratories of democracy. The state first ladies are very much aware of how their status borrows from and is compared with the nation's First Lady. Overseas the wives of foreign chief executives have an enhanced visibility because of the celebrity of their American coun-

terpart. The place of the political spouses is gaining in recognition and significance, and the result will probably be comparative evaluations of how different cultures treat marriages of national leaders.¹⁶

Skepticism persists about whether all this interest in First Ladies is a valid scholarly activity. The comments of the woman who wrote *The Washington Post* to denounce the institution find an echo in the minds of many men who invoke the usual arguments about "triviality" whenever First Ladies are discussed. Of course First Ladies are not presidents, as everyone of them has well known. They do, however, have a relationship with presidents that is unique. What the authors represented in this issue are saying is that writing about presidents as if the First Lady did not exist perpetuates the stereotypes of a male-centered political world and makes the presidency a less real institution. "Feminist criticism is another way of knowing," writes Carolyn G. Heilbrun, and her thought applies equally well to the wives of presidents. Analyzing the work of First Ladies provides a valuable and insightful path to knowledge about the American presidency in all of its human dimensions.¹⁷

Notes

1. Jackie Endres, "Who Needs First Ladies?" *The Washington Post*, 31 May 1990. As evidence of the public's interest in First Ladies, consider the appeals of recent advertising campaigns that promise "Nancy Reagan Values at Barbara Bush Prices," or "poochie pearls inspired by a necklace worn by our First Lady." Another retailer urges the public to order "Our Original First Lady Pearl Necklace."

2. Such older works include Bess Furman, *White House Profile* (Indianapolis, Indiana: Bobbs Merrill, 1957), Marianne Means, *The Woman in the White House* (New York, N.Y.: Random House, 1963), and Sol Barzman, *The First Ladies* (New York, N.Y.: Cowles Book Co., 1970). In the same tradition is Paul F. Boller, Jr., *Presidential Wives: An Anecdotal History* (New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 1988).

3. For a consideration of the institution in light of the public attention it received during the 1980s, see Lewis L. Gould, "First Ladies," *The American Scholar*, 55(Autumn, 1986): 528-535.

4. Betty Boyd Caroli, *First Ladies* (New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. xxii; Myra G. Gutin, *The President's Partner: The First Lady in the Twentieth Century* (Westport, Ct.: Greenwood Press, 1989), p. 2; Mary C. Ryan and Nancy Kegan Smith, eds., *Modern First Ladies: Their Documentary Legacy* (Washington, D.C.: The National Archives, 1989).

5. For example, the Social files of Lady Bird Johnson provide a large amount of evidence on such important but neglected women as Brooke Astor, Jane Freeman, Mary Lasker, and Abigail McCarthy. The volume of letters from the public in these files also serves to illustrate the condition of women during the 1960s in general.

6. Historians of the presidency need to explore the implications of "a central insight of feminist theory, that public and private are not separate but intersecting." Judith Lowder Newton, "History as Usual? Feminism and the 'New Historicism,'" in H. Aram Veesser, ed., *The New Historicism* (New York, N.Y.: Routledge, 1989), p. 156.

7. "Mrs. Hoover's Talk to the 4-H Clubs," *Journal of Home Economics*, (September, 1929): 663-664; "Mrs. Hoover Lauds Girl Scout Relief," *The New York Times*, 8 October 1932.

8. Joseph P. Lash, *Eleanor and Franklin* (New York, N.Y.: W.W. Norton, 1971); Doris Faber, *The Life of Lorena Hickok: E.R.'s Friend* (New York, N.Y.: William Morrow, 1980); Joan Hoff-Wilson and Marjorie Lightman, eds., *Without Precedent: The Life and Career of Eleanor Roosevelt* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1984); Hugh Davis Graham, "The Paradox of Eleanor Roosevelt: Alcoholism's Child," *The Virginia Quarterly Review*, 63(Spring 1987): 210-230.

9. Susan Ware, *Beyond Suffrage: Women and the New Deal* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981). Martha Swain is working on a biography of Ellen Woodward.

10. For an example of the racist campaign literature circulated against Mrs. Roosevelt in the South in 1940, see "Racial Distinction Abolished: President Roosevelt Permits Wife to Dine Negro Porters to Obtain Votes for the New Deal," pamphlet in "Presidential 1940," Box 9, House of Representatives Papers, Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library, Austin, Texas.

11. For general essays on these two women, see Maurine H. Beasley, "Harry's Silent Partner: The Papers of Bess Truman," and Martin M. Teasley, "Ike Was Her Career: The Papers of Mamie Doud Eisenhower," in Ryan and Smith, eds., *Modern First Ladies*, pp. 71-96.

12. Mary Van Rensselaer Thayer, *Jacqueline Kennedy: The White House Years* (Boston, Mass.: Little, Brown, 1967), and C. David Heymann, *A Woman Named Jackie* (New York, N.Y.: Lyle Stuart, 1989). Even without access to the Social Files, there are still informative materials about Mrs. Kennedy that are open for research at the Kennedy Library. See, for example, Letitia Baldrige to Kenneth O'Donnell, 15 July 1961, White House Central Subject File, White House 3, Box 1005, John F. Kennedy Library, Boston, regarding White House furnishing and the use of French products instead of American ones.

13. Mrs. Johnson's beautification work is discussed in Lewis L. Gould, *Lady Bird Johnson and the Environment* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1988).

14. Julie Nixon Eisenhower, *Pat Nixon: The Untold Story* (New York, N.Y.: Simon and Schuster, 1986) offers her daughter's perspective on Mrs. Nixon. Paul A. Schmidt, "'She Deserved So Much More': The Papers of Pat Nixon," in Ryan and Smith, eds., *Modern First Ladies*, pp. 121-130, gives a good sense of the extent of Mrs. Nixon's records.

15. Nancy Reagan and William Novak, *My Turn: The Memoirs of Nancy Reagan* (New York, N.Y.: Random House, 1989).

16. "States' first spouses seek solace in unity at Brown U. seminars," *Providence Journal*, 20 September 1988; Lewis L. Gould, *Governors' Wives: Women of Influence* (Madison, Wisconsin: Robert M. La Follette Institute of Public Affairs, 1986); Lisa K. Hill, "'All in the Day's Work': Cornelia Bryce Pinchot and the Decade of the 1920s," (senior honors essay: The University of Texas at Austin, 1989). Pinchot was the First Lady of Pennsylvania. A sense of how the interest in First Ladies has become international can be gained from the reaction to the visit of Barbara Bush and Raisa Gorbachev to Wellesley College in early June 1990. See, "Barbara Bush, Wowing Wellesley," *The Washington Post*, 2 June 1990. I am indebted to Kristie Miller for this reference.

17. Carolyn G. Heilbrun, *Hamlet's Mother and Other Women* (New York, N.Y.: Columbia University Press, 1990), p. 216.



Nancy Reagan has stood by her man, says historian Betty Boyd Caroli, but has shown no inclination to strike out on her own.

TOO OLD, TOO BOLD, TOO PUSHY, TOO PLASTIC—FIRST LADIES HEAR IT ALL, BUT NEVER 'SHE'S PERFECT'

IN HER
OWN **Words**

In the course of her six years-plus in the pseudo-office of U.S. First Lady, Nancy Reagan has a) been criticized for the extravagance of her wardrobe, b) been characterized as "a dragon" by her husband's chief of staff, and c) taken heat from columnist William Safire for making the President look like "a wimp." Not what a woman would expect who was, after all, promised a Rose Garden—but nothing extraordinary, says historian Betty Boyd Caroli, in the annals of First Lady abuse. According to Caroli, 49, author of *First Ladies: An Intimate Look at How 36 Women Handled What May Be the Most Demanding, Unpaid, Unelected Job in America* (Oxford University Press, \$19.95), the President's wife has always been subject to constant scrutiny and unceasing criticism. During the Civil War, Mary Todd Lincoln, who had Confederate relatives, was all but



Caroli, married to oboist Livio Caroli of the New York City Opera, works in the study of their Greenwich Village apartment.

accused of treason. Margaret Taylor was charged with coarseness (for allegedly smoking a pipe), Dolley Madison with entertaining too lavishly, and Jane Pierce with unappealing morbidity. Martha Washington, 58 when George was inaugurated, was described as too old for the job, Julia Tyler, 24, as too young. Caroli, professor of history at Kingsborough Community College of the City University of New York, discussed the burden and changing role of First Ladyship with correspondent Maria Wilhelm.

What does America expect of a First Lady?

In a word, perfection. We don't want her to be too outspoken or too quiet. We don't want her to spend too much money or too little. We want someone who will represent us well abroad, but who will not seem extravagant by

CONTINUED

standards at home. We want a perfect mother with perfect children and a perfect family.

Has any First Lady measured up?

No one has been spared criticism. Martha Washington was attacked for having too many white horses draw her carriage, and it was said she served rancid cream with her trifle. Edith Roosevelt, Teddy's wife, was criticized for tightfistedness. Someone wrote that she dressed on \$300 a year and looked it, though she could easily have spent much more. And Eleanor Roosevelt, who is generally considered the most successful First Lady, had some furious critics, people who resented her as too active and too vocal. But no First Lady has been as thick-skinned as Eleanor. She realized that people were going to criticize everything about her—her voice, her clothes, her looks, her views. She was prepared.

Wasn't Eleanor Roosevelt a striking departure from the First Ladies who came before her?

Lou Hoover, her immediate predecessor, was an early feminist and deserves credit for setting the stage for Eleanor. She gave the kind of speeches on radio that we remember Eleanor giving, and she too is thought to have influenced her husband in promoting women in government. Each First Lady builds upon the one who has come before her; there is an obvious continuum in the position. What is expected of each First Lady reflects changes in societal roles for all women.

How do First Ladies mirror the times in which they live?

In the 19th century there were times when femininity was equated with frailty. Eliza Johnson, Andrew's wife, appeared in public only two times, once at a dinner, which she left coughing, and once at a children's party, where she introduced herself as an invalid. She was so reclusive that newspapers in the capital called her almost a myth. Similarly, Jane Pierce disappeared for four years while she mourned her son's death. We accepted an invisible First Lady then, but we don't now. Despite her mastectomy, Betty Ford was expected to go out. Moreover, she could talk about her cancer. Yet in 1957, when Mamie Eisenhower had a hysterectomy, the White House wouldn't even use the word in a news

CONTINUED



A tireless speaker and traveler whose activism was both applauded and reviled, khaki-clad Eleanor Roosevelt was greeted in New Zealand by a nose-rubbing Maori guide in 1943.



Among her ceremonial roles, Lou Hoover wore the uniform of Girl Scouts' national president. The Scouts called her Buffalo.



Edith Carow Roosevelt (with stepdaughter Alice, left) bore Teddy five children and sometimes implied she thought him a sixth.



Jackie Kennedy (with Caroline) set her own agenda as First Lady, avoiding politics and shunning onerous duties as White House greeter.



Caroli found Pat Nixon (fighting back tears as her husband left office) a courageous woman routinely squelched by presidential aides.

Words

release. She was described as having "an operation similar to those that many women undergo in middle age."

How has the position of First Lady evolved?

The first five Presidential wives, from Martha Washington to Louisa Adams, were from wealthy backgrounds. Some had served long apprenticeships in Europe, had met royalty and were well-equipped to be America's "queen." During the next 40 years, the First Ladies, with the exception of Mary Todd Lincoln and the socially prominent, politically influential Sarah Childress Polk, dropped from sight. These were the wives of a new type of President, the "common man" from the West. It was easier for these women to stay upstairs in the White House than to come down and be criticized for what they looked like or how they served their meals.

When did the next change occur?

The era of the invisible First Lady ended with Julia Dent Grant, who loved the spotlight though she was unphoto-



Lady Bird Johnson reportedly said that if she had known she would be First Lady, she would have changed her nose and nickname.

genic and slightly cross-eyed and always sat with her face away from the camera. The Grants became the first "star" family in the White House. In the 1870s, Lucy Webb Hayes traveled across the country with her husband and became a national figure as a result. Since "Lemonade Lucy," the symbol of the temperance movement, most First Ladies have been identified with a project.

When did the First Lady begin to be seen as more than the President's wife?

In the early 1900s the office of the First Lady was institutionalized. Edith Roosevelt was the first to appoint her own secretary, and people understood they could forward their demands to her. As a consequence, the First Lady became an officer of the government in a way she had never been before.

What did Jackie Kennedy contribute to the job?

Jackie Kennedy is a public relations success story, but she did nothing to change the role of the First Lady. She was a very carefully orchestrated part of the Kennedy Administration and an important one. But Lady Bird John-



Through her frankness about herself and her family, Betty Ford (being serenaded with the President on their 26th anniversary) helped set a new standard for personal forthrightness.

Words

son was frequently left to fill in, sometimes at a moment's notice. Jackie wouldn't meet with important Democratic politicians or even do the courtesy things that were expected of the wife of the President. She came up with all sorts of excuses about sinus trouble, which she didn't have, and she used her children as a way out. Her glamour and aloofness made for a contradictory appeal. History professors, polled long after she left the White House, rated her sixth among 20th-century First Ladies. But on the telling issue of integrity, they rated her

last—perhaps a reflection of their disenchantment with her when she married Aristotle Onassis.

What role did Pat Nixon play?

Richard Nixon didn't understand what Jack Kennedy did, that the First Lady can be a powerful and positive influence. Pat Nixon worked hard. She had ideas and would have liked to do something as First Lady, but every time she made a significant proposal, the West Wing sat on it. She was gutsy. I blame the President's side of the White House for making her a nothing.

How did Rosalynn Carter perceive her position as First Lady?

She saw herself as a very separate and valuable part of her husband's Administration. She felt justified in sitting in on Cabinet meetings—an unprecedented move, though Helen Taft used to listen outside the door. Her trip to Central and South America in 1977 was the equivalent of Denis Thatcher calling at the White House as Margaret's representative. She was prepared by National Security Council advisers and was ready to discuss substantive issues. Latin leaders didn't know how to deal with her.

Is Nancy Reagan part of the continuum you refer to among First Ladies? Has she built upon those who came before her?

Nancy wants very much to protect her husband's place in history and, through him, her own. She will do anything she can to that end. One gets the sense that her causes are picked up for the moment and for what they will do for the Administration, not out of any deeply felt social concern. If foster grandparents was such a great idea five years ago, why isn't it now?

How will history judge Nancy Reagan?

Eleanor Roosevelt was something special. Rosalynn Carter was something special, and so was Lady Bird Johnson, who understood that a First Lady could never be a private person. Nancy Reagan, insofar as she sees herself as her husband's protector without a constituency of her own, doesn't merit the same attention. She has not advanced the position and has not managed to duplicate the real gains made by previous First Ladies.

How do you expect the role of the President's spouse to evolve from now on?

The role will surely change in response to a female President or Vice President. It will be interesting to see if the officeholder's husband will take on the traditionally female tasks—cutting ribbons, dealing with the stream of people who come through the White House for photographs, etc. We'll also have to examine whether the First Spouse, male or female, could work outside the White House. Carla Voltoni, the wife of the former President of Italy, Sandro Pertini, continued to work as a psychologist and refused to live in the official residence, use the official car or take her husband's name. We're in for some changes. □

BILL PIERCE/TIME

First Ladies Step Further Out of Shadows

By BARBARA GAMAREKIAN

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, March 9 — In her husband's Presidency, Nancy Reagan has received her share of scrutiny, analysis, criticism and praise, along with President Reagan.

Her politics, her feuds, her influence behind the scenes, her designer wardrobe, her anti-drug crusade and her "Dragon Lady" reputation — all have been written about, speculated about, gossiped about and joked about in newspaper columns and on late night television talk shows.

It is clear that the position of First Lady is no longer a safe haven where a wife can bask in the knowledge that her husband has been elected to the most prestigious job in the land.

Possible New Role

As Mrs. Reagan is preparing to leave the White House, scholars and political figures are taking a new look at the role of First Ladies and some expect them to wield far more influence in the future — as a political partner.

They point to the increasingly large staffs, the budget of several hundred thousand dollars that goes with the job and the growing attention from the press and public.

"There is no doubt today that the demands on the First Lady have increased dramatically," said James S. Rosebush, who served as chief of staff for Nancy Reagan for four years and whose book, "First Lady, Public Wife," was published this week by Madison Books.

Lewis L. Gould, a professor of American history at the University of Texas, who in 1982 began teaching a course called First Ladies in the 20th century, said the role of First Lady as an institution in American Government is as important as it is ill-defined.

Noting that scholarship on Presidential wives has begun to emerge as a separate field of study, he said, "There have been individual biographies in the past, but now there is a systematic effort to compare and see what patterns and similarities exist among First Ladies."

Dr. Gould, whose new book, "Lady Bird Johnson and the Environment," is being published by the University Press of Kansas, observed: "The growth of the institution of First Lady has paralleled the growth of the strong Presidency. She now has a formal staff, a staff director, and you are beginning to get a bureaucracy."

Today, in addition to overseeing the running of the Presidential residence and serving as a hostess, the First Lady must carve out some niche for herself in the national agenda, some program for the public good.

Rosalynn Carter, the former First Lady, sees the evolving role of the political spouse as a reflection of the



Associated Press



The New York Times

Some experts expect Presidents' wives to become far more influential.

changing role of women in American society and the growing number of two-career families.

"I don't think there will ever be another First Lady who will act only as more or less a hostess," she said.

"One thing you realize when you get to the White House is that the First Lady has influence and resources," Mrs. Carter said. "You see the problems that come to the President's desk and see how far short governmental programs fall in meeting the needs of the people. It made me want to do what I could while I was there and had that platform."

Mrs. Carter said her four years in the White House "opened windows for me" and broadened her outlook.

"Things I had been concerned about in the past seemed very petty," she

hurts in the world, and you see those. You feel you might have some influence for change."

Mrs. Reagan, speaking to a publishers' group last spring about her anti-drug crusade, reflected that same growing realization of power at her fingertips.

'A White Glove Pulpit'

"If the President has a bully pulpit," she said, "then the First Lady has a white glove pulpit. It's more refined, more restricted, more ceremonial, but it's a pulpit all the same."

A cardinal rule of spousal politics is there can only be one star in the family. A President's wife must walk a fine line between influence and interference.

"It is a job that has no job description and is determined totally by its occupant but, oh boy, just let someone sit and play bridge like Mamie Eisenhower within the White House today," remarked Mr. Rosebush.

"The only constraint on the First Lady is public opinion," he said. "And what public opinion is saying is we want an activist First Lady, but we don't want her to overstep the bounds. It is O.K. to be your husband's closest adviser, but don't push, don't control, don't outdistance him, don't overshadow him."

The era of the adoring, silent help-

is: just what will be taking her place?

Among the wives of the Presidential aspirants, four are lawyers and most have pursued independent careers. Will a future First Lady walk out of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue each morning with a briefcase under her arm? Will White House families have to wrestle with tough two-career decisions?

Wives With 'Real Jobs'

"This is the year we are beginning to see that crunch," said Ann Lewis, a political consultant. "The political culture mirrors society and in a country where the majority of women work full time we ought not to be surprised to see candidates with working spouses who have real jobs."

There is no mention of the role of Presidential wife in the Constitution and it was Edith Roosevelt, wife of Theodore Roosevelt, who was first assigned a personal assistant. Nancy Reagan has a staff of 18, but she herself is on no payroll.

Presidents come to office with the benefit of weeks of preparation and a transition team. But their wives, said Dr. Gould, "pay a call at the White House before inauguration and that is about all the transition she gets. In January, Boom! The world falls in on her. Everyone wants to know what she's going to do. Suddenly she discovers there are a million demands."

Nancy Reagan's activism is far from unprecedented among First Ladies. Ellen Wilson, left, Woodrow Wilson's first wife, worked on behalf of the Slum Clearance Act of 1913; Eleanor Roosevelt, above, was thought by critics to meddle too much in political affairs, and Rosalynn Carter often sat in on Cabinet meetings.



The New York Times

Briefing

South Koreans' plea: don't push ■ Ex-Labor

Secretaries gather for 75th anniversary.

A Plea to Slow Down

The heads of two of South Korea's biggest business concerns, Samsung and Daewoo, which rank among the largest companies in the world, visited Washington this week with a message of caution for American business and Government leaders:

The United States, they said, is asking Seoul to do too much too quickly in terms of opening its markets to imports, and is running the risk of a backlash that could adversely affect American interests.

Samsung's chief, Kun-Hee Lee warned that the backlash could take the form of student demonstrations to remove the 45,000 American troops on the peninsula.

Both he and the Daewoo chairman, and founder, Woo-Chung Kim, note that South Korea, which owes \$45 billion mainly to American banks, is still one of the biggest third world debtors and needs the trade surpluses it is now chalking up with the United States to try to bring its debt down to more manageable proportions. South Korea is one of the few countries that is actually reducing its debt, and it hopes to drop the level to \$15 billion within three to four years.

Birthday Party

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the Department of Labor, and eight former Labor Secretaries will be in Washington today to be honored by its current Secretary, Ann Dore McLaughlin, and more than 2,000 Government, industry and labor leaders.

Among those expected to attend are

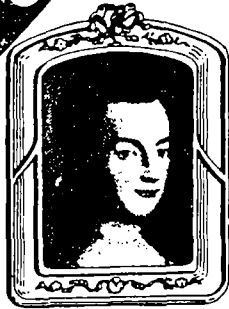


Tom Bkinn

a number of department alumni, including 95-year-old Clara Beyer, who joined the Labor Department in 1917, and in the 1930's served as executive assistant to Labor Secretary Frances Perkins. The master of ceremonies will be W. J. Urvy Jr. who was Labor Sec-

QUIZ

Fascinating First Ladies



Abigail Adams



Eleanor Roosevelt



Barbara Bush



Lucille Hayes



Betty Ford

Who is the first First Lady in U.S. history to be born in the same month as her husband? Answer: Barbara Bush. (Both she and her husband have June birthdays.) How many other First Ladies can you identify from the clues below? Take our quiz and choose the 10 correct answers from among the 14 First Ladies listed.

1. She had a troubled life and even came under investigation by a Senate committee for possible wartime "disloyalty."

2. An expert on wildflowers, this wife of a President led a campaign to beautify our nation's highways.

3. She was the second wife of the first President to marry while in office.

4. This shy First Lady nevertheless became an outspoken supporter of civil and human rights and served as a representative to the United Nations.

5. This President's wife studied dance and later became a leader in fighting drug abuse.

6. She was known as "The Secret President" because she assumed many of her husband's duties after he suffered a stroke.

7. She was both wife and mother of a President.

8. She starred in the film *Hellcats of the Navy*.

9. A teetotaler, this First Lady earned the nickname "Lemonade Lucy" for her refusal to serve alcohol at the White House.

10. She was known for her folksiness; her only child went on to become a successful author.

- A. Anna Harrison
- B. Jacqueline Kennedy
- C. Dolley Madison
- D. Eleanor Roosevelt
- E. Nancy Reagan
- F. Julia Tyler
- G. Bess Truman
- H. Lucille Hayes
- I. Martha Washington
- J. Mary Todd Lincoln
- K. Lady Bird Johnson
- L. Edith Wilson
- M. Betty Ford
- N. Abigail Adams

Answers: 1.J; 2.K; 3.F; 4.D; 5.M; 6.L; 7.N; 8.E; 9.H; 10.G.

—Kelly N. Humphrey

Air traveler's syndrome DO'S & DON'TS

No one can sit in an airline seat—especially in economy class—for very long before feeling stiff and confined. Such discomforts can easily be remedied just by getting up and moving around and by doing a few simple exercises.

Occasionally, however, a far more serious problem—blood clots—can afflict an air traveler, particularly on flights of four hours or more. A symptom of a clot is usually swelling and/or a cramp of the leg during or after a flight. More severe symptoms, such as chest pain, can occur anywhere from 48 hours to several weeks after a flight.

Illustration by Deborah Chabrian

ter a long plane ride and may indicate the blood clot has traveled to the lung.

Blood clots can occur for a variety of reasons. Prolonged sitting—especially when the seat presses against the back of the knees—decreases the blood's ability to circulate. The altitude may also be a contributing factor because the mild decrease in the oxygen level can keep blood from flowing properly. And finally, dehydration—caused by dry cabin air along with excessive consumption of caffeine or alcohol—can increase the chances of blood-clot formation.

Fortunately, blood clots

do not occur that often.

However, anyone traveling by air who is pregnant or has a history of blood or cardiovascular disorders should consult with a doctor before flying and take special precautions when they do fly. Richard Gorlin, M.D., of Mt. Sinai Medical Center in New York, suggests getting up from your seat at least once every hour, drinking lots of fluids, and avoiding caffeine and alcohol. Also, try to refrain from crossing your legs.

The following exercises can be done in your seat to help relieve muscle soreness and tension.

—A.C.M.

IN-FLIGHT EXERCISES

● **For neck:** Drop chin to chest. Roll chin to left shoulder; then to right shoulder. Repeat 10 times.

● **For upper back and shoulders:** Clasp hands in front and push arms out straight, knuckles facing you. Touch chin to chest, hold 3 seconds. Repeat 4 times.

● **For feet:** With feet 2 inches off floor, flex one foot and point other, rapidly alternating feet in a pedaling motion 20 times.

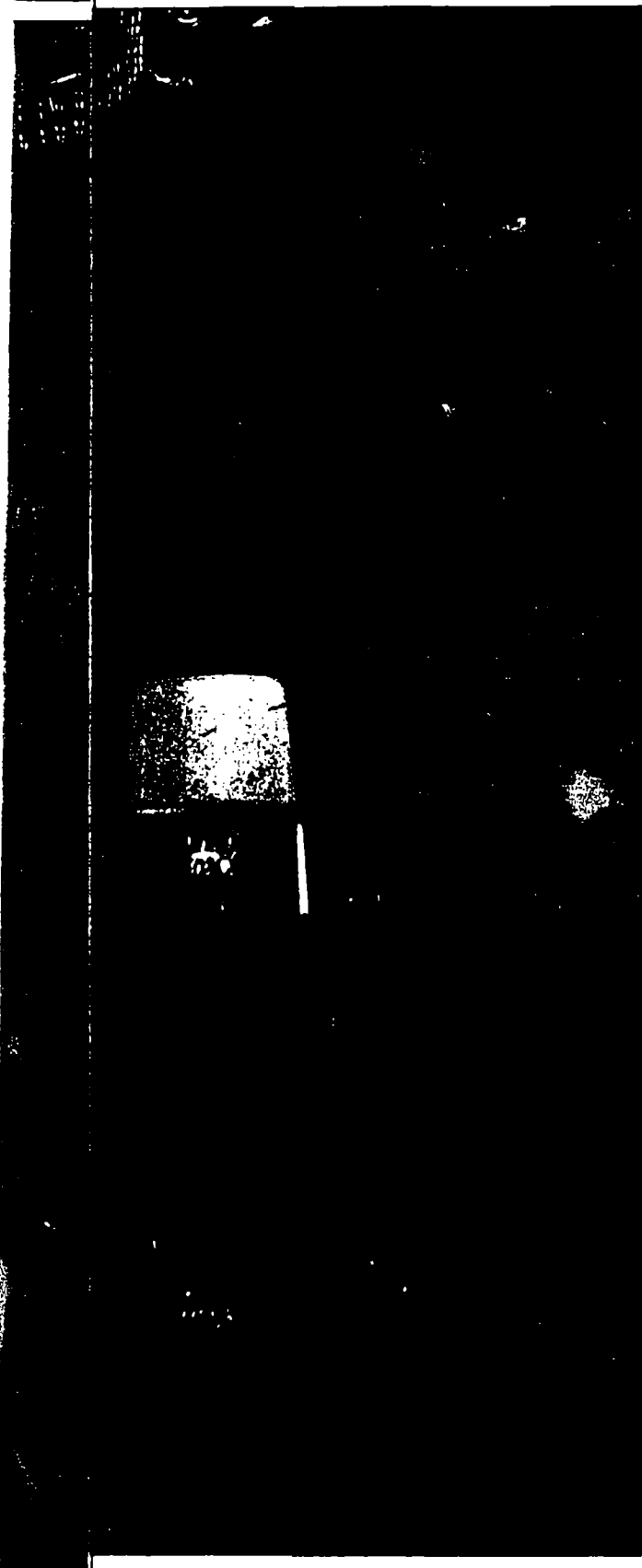
Source: Sandra Fisher, exercise consultant and president, Fitness by Fisher, New York.



● HISTORY



Photography: Harry Benson Reporting: Doris G. Kinney Text: George Howe Colt



FIRST LADIES

THE VETERANS
OF AMERICA'S SECOND
TOUGHEST JOB

"I think I am more like a state prisoner than anything else," Martha Washington wrote to her niece in 1789. While America's first First Lady concentrated on her role as gracious hostess, her successor, Abigail Adams, became so involved in affairs of state that she was nicknamed Mrs. President. Following Eleanor Roosevelt's example, recent First Ladies have assumed growing influence as social activists and unofficial advisers to the President. On these pages, LIFE looks at our six living First Ladies—who represent the past quarter century of U.S. history—and what life after the White House has brought them.

NANCY REAGAN

After a shaky start in which her Galanos gowns, waves of hairdressers and "new china policy" earned her the sobriquet Queen Nancy, America's 36th First Lady (in the Red Room under a portrait of Angelica Van Buren) has buckled down to serious work. For her campaign against teenage drug abuse, Nancy Reagan, 64, has traveled 100,000 miles, visited 28 states and last

year hosted a conference of First Ladies from 30 nations. She plans some 20 major White House dinners a year and makes an official appearance almost every day. But her main task, she often says, is "to protect Ronnie," which she has doggedly done through his skirmishes with the press, his bout with cancer and the assassination attempt. When she leaves the White House in 1989, she will be the only two-term First Lady since Mamie Eisenhower.



"Since coming home," says Rosalynn Carter, in her Plains, Ga., backyard, "we've learned to appreciate luxuries like being able to walk through the woods for



ROSALYNN CARTER

"In the beginning it was awesome to be living in the White House," says Rosalynn Carter, 58. "Amy and I took a guidebook and walked through the rooms, matching the names with the pictures on the walls. Then we read about the former Presidents and their families. It was thrilling to realize that Mary Todd Lincoln had lived here in the same rooms while the President was in his office at the other end of the hall." Unlike Mrs. Lincoln, Rosalynn Carter did not limit herself to social amenities. She was one of the most politically active Presidents' wives in history. Focusing on the problems of the elderly and the mentally ill, she testified before a congressional committee, pushed her pet projects during working lunches with her husband, and became the first presidential wife to sit in on Cabinet meetings. "It wasn't anything different for me," says Mrs. Carter, who was dubbed the Steel Magnolia by the press. "I had always worked with Jimmy." Since returning to Plains in 1980, she has continued to speak out on human rights, and to collaborate with her husband—they are coauthoring a book tentatively titled *How to Make the Most of the Second Half of Your Life*.

PAT NIXON

"I don't think I would have chosen politics for my life," she once admitted. "It was what my husband wanted and there was a part for me to play, so I dug in and played it." If Pat Nixon was uncomfortable as First Lady, she never acknowledged it. While criticized for her remoteness—Plastic Pat, she was called—she became the most widely traveled First Lady in history. She added hundreds of paintings and antiques to the White House collection, promoted volunteerism and community self-help, and excelled at mixing with White House visitors—prime ministers and tourists alike. "She had more ways to say how lovely a woman's hat was than anybody I've ever known," observed one White House watcher. And through the Watergate debacle she showed courage, stamina and loyalty. Since leaving the White House in 1974, the Nixons have lived in San Clemente, Calif., New York City and, for the last five years, in New Jersey. In fragile health—she has suffered two strokes—Mrs. Nixon visits her two daughters and four grandchildren, tends her garden, occasionally comes into Manhattan for shopping, and guards the privacy she has sought for so long.

Pat Nixon, 74, reads aloud to her granddaughter Melanie, 18 months, during a recent visit to Julie Nixon Eisenhower's home. The Nixons' Saddle River, N.J., residence is equidistant from the homes of their children—Tricia Cox, in New York City, and Julie, in Berwyn, Pa.

...ds for
miles without seeing another person."



In the living room of her summer home in Beaver Creek, Colo., the 34th First Lady reviews blueprints for an addition to the Betty Ford Center.

BETTY FORD

She was not the first woman to be overwhelmed by becoming First Lady—in 1852, on hearing news of her husband Franklin's election, Jane Pierce fainted—but when Betty Ford was thrust into the spotlight, her candor endeared her to a nation reeling from Watergate. "I was outspoken," she admits. "But I knew that to survive, I'd have to be forthright. At that point honesty was a very sensitive subject." Since leaving the White House in 1977, Mrs. Ford has been no less frank about her successful battle against drugs and alcohol. Today, at 68, she heads the Betty Ford Center, a hospital for treating chemical dependency, near her home in Rancho Mirage, Calif. "As First Lady, you realize the responsibility you have to the country," she says. "Once you leave you don't want to stop accomplishing things."



Jackie Onassis, 56, and son John, 25, leave her niece's wedding.

JACQUELINE KENNEDY ONA

When she moved into the White House in 1961 at 31, she became the youngest First Lady since Frances Folsom, 21, married Grover Cleveland in the Blue Room 75 years earlier. While her style captured the American imagination, the "Jackie Look" dominated fashion, and she launched a historic restoration of the White House. Rediscovering old treasures—she rescued Lincoln's china and Monroe's flatware from the cellar—Mrs. Kennedy transformed her temporary home into a showcase for American art and antiques. When the President was assassinated in November 1963, her dignity earned the world's respect. Today she works as an editor in Manhattan, vacations on Martha's Vineyard and permits only rare sightings of her famous face to a world still hungry for recollections of Camelot. ➡



"The First Lady is elected by only one man," says Lady Bird Johnson, reclining in a thicket of gayfeathers she has planted on the LBJ Ranch.

LADY BIRD JOHNSON

"As First Lady, I felt my main job was to establish an island of serenity where Lyndon could find surcease from the enormous burdens he shouldered," says Lady Bird Johnson, 73. "But there is also the opportunity and the podium if you care to use it."

In her five years at the White House, Mrs. Johnson did both, soothing the cyclonic, moody LBJ through the turbulent mid-'60s and championing the budding ecology movement. In her beautification campaign for the nation's public lands, Mrs. Johnson logged 200,000 miles in 40 cross-country trips. She had two million daffodils planted in the U.S. capital.

Since returning to Texas and the LBJ Ranch in 1969 (her husband died in 1973), Mrs. Johnson

has been no less active, participating in events at the LBJ Library in Austin, speaking at symposia and visiting her two daughters, Lynda Robb in Virginia and Luci Turpin in Toronto, and seven grandchildren. She celebrated her 70th birthday in 1982 by launching the National Wildflower Research Center near Austin, with a donation of 60 acres and \$125,000. On the ranch where she once hosted lavish barbecues for presidents and prime ministers, she now has friends in for supper and cards, oversees work on the 180 acres and walks more than a mile each morning. "You come into the White House knowing you are a temporary resident—each day a golden coin to spend," she says. "Battering as some of those days were, I'm so grateful to have lived them." ♦

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JOSEPH NATHAN KANE

Facts About the Presidents

A COMPILATION OF
BIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL
INFORMATION

Sixth Edition

THE H.W. WILSON COMPANY
NEW YORK
1993



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TEN PRESIDENTS' FATHERS REMARIED—Continued

died on March 14, 1885. His father married Caroline A. Brown on September 9, 1891.

Gerald Rudolph Ford was 2 years old when his father, Leslie Lynch King, and his mother, Dorothy Ayer Gardner King were divorced, in 1915. His father married Margaret Atwood on January 5, 1919. Ford remained with his mother who married Gerald Rudolph Ford on February 1, 1921.

Five Presidents were the sons of their fathers' second marriages. They were Washington, Pierce, Benjamin Harrison, Taft, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

WIVES OF THE PRESIDENTS—DATES OF BIRTH, MARRIAGE, AND DEATH

Washington

Martha Dandridge, b. June 21, 1731; m. Custis 1749; m. Washington Jan. 6, 1759; d. May 22, 1802

J. Adams

Abigail Smith, b. Nov. 11, 1744; m. Oct. 25, 1764; d. Oct. 28, 1818

Jefferson

Martha Wayles, b. Oct. 19, 1748; m. Skelton Nov. 20, 1766; m. Jefferson Jan. 1, 1772; d. Sept. 6, 1782

Madison

Dolley Dandridge Payne, b. May 20, 1768; m. Todd Jan. 7, 1790; m. Madison Sept. 15, 1794; d. July 12, 1849

Monroe

Elizabeth Kortright, b. June 30, 1768; m. Feb. 16, 1786; d. Sept. 23, 1830

J. Q. Adams

Louisa Catherine Johnson, b. Feb. 12, 1775; m. July 26, 1797; d. May 14, 1852

Jackson

Rachel Donelson, b. June 15 (?), 1767; m. Jackson Jan. 17, 1794; d. Dec. 22, 1828

Van Buren

Hannah Hoes, b. Mar. 8, 1783; m. Feb. 21, 1807; d. Feb. 5, 1819

W. H. Harrison

Anna Tuthill Symmes, b. July 25, 1775; m. Nov. 25, 1795; d. Feb. 25, 1864

Tyler

Letitia Christian, b. Nov. 12, 1790; m. Mar. 29, 1813; d. Sept. 10, 1842

Julia Gardiner, b. May 4, 1820; m. June 26, 1844; d. July 10, 1889

Polk

Sarah Childress, b. Sept. 4, 1803; m. Jan. 1, 1824; d. Aug. 14, 1891

Taylor

Margaret Mackall Smith, b. Sept. 21, 1788; m. June 21, 1810; d. Aug. 18, 1852

Fillmore

Abigail Powers, b. Mar. 13, 1798; m. Feb. 5, 1826; d. Mar. 30, 1853

Caroline Carmichael, b. Oct. 21, 1813; m. McIntosh; m. Fillmore Feb. 10, 1858; d. Aug. 11, 1881

Pierce

Jane Means Appleton, b. Mar. 12, 1806; m. Nov. 10, 1834; d. Dec. 2, 1863

Lincoln

Mary Todd, b. Dec. 13, 1818; m. Nov. 4, 1842; d. July 16, 1882

A. Johnson

Eliza McCardle, b. Oct. 4, 1810; m. May 17, 1827; d. Jan. 15, 1876

Grant

Julia Boggs Dent, b. Jan. 26, 1826; m. Aug. 22, 1848; d. Dec. 14, 1902

Hayes

Lucy Ware Webb, b. Aug. 28, 1831; m. Dec. 30, 1852; d. June 25, 1889

Garfield

Lucretia Rudolph, b. Apr. 19, 1832; m. Nov. 11, 1858; d. Mar. 14, 1918

Arthur

Ellen Lewis Herndon, b. Aug. 30, 1837; m. Oct. 25, 1859; d. Jan. 12, 1880

Cleveland

Frances Folsom, b. July 21, 1864; m. Cleveland June 2, 1886; m. Preston Feb. 10, 1913; d. Oct. 29, 1947

B. Harrison

Caroline Lavinia Scott, b. Oct. 1, 1832; m. Oct. 20, 1853; d. Oct. 25, 1892

Mary Scott Lord, b. Apr. 30, 1858; m. Dimmick; m. Harrison Apr. 6, 1896; d. Jan. 5, 1948

McKinley

Ida Saxton, b. June 8, 1847; m. Jan. 25, 1871; d. May 26, 1907

T. Roosevelt

Alice Hathaway Lee, b. July 29, 1861; m. Oct. 27, 1880; d. Feb. 14, 1884

Edith Kermit Carow, b. Aug. 6, 1861; m. Dec. 2, 1886; d. Sept. 30, 1948

Taft

Helen Herron, b. Jan. 2, 1861; m. June 19, 1886; d. May 22, 1943

Wilson

Ellen Louise Axson, b. May 15, 1860; m. June 24, 1885; d. Aug. 6, 1914

Edith Bolling, b. Oct. 15, 1872; m. Galt Apr. 30, 1896;
m. Wilson Dec. 18, 1915; d. Dec. 28, 1961

Harding

Florence Kling, b. Aug. 15, 1860; m. DeWolfe 1880; m.
Harding July 8, 1891; d. Nov. 21, 1924

Coolidge

Grace Anna Goodhue, b. Jan. 3, 1879; m. Oct. 4, 1905;
d. July 8, 1957

Hoover

Lou Henry, b. Mar. 29, 1874; m. Feb. 10, 1899; d. Jan.
7, 1944

F. D. Roosevelt

(Anna) Eleanor Roosevelt, b. Oct. 11, 1884; m. Mar.
17, 1905; died Nov. 7, 1962

Truman

Bess (Elizabeth) Virginia Wallace, b. Feb. 13, 1885; m.
June 28, 1919; d. Oct. 18, 1982

Eisenhower

Mamie Geneva Doud, b. Nov. 14, 1896; m. July 1,
1916; d. Nov. 1, 1979

Kennedy

Jacqueline Lee Bouvier, b. July 28, 1929; m. Kennedy
Sept. 12, 1953; m. Onassis Oct. 20, 1968

L. B. Johnson

Lady Bird (Claudia Alta) Taylor, b. Dec. 22, 1912; m.
Nov. 17, 1934

Nixon

(Thelma Catherine) Patricia Ryan, b. Mar. 16, 1912;
m. June 21, 1940

Ford

Betty (Elizabeth) Anne Bloomer, b. Apr. 18, 1918; m.
Warren 1942; m. Ford Oct. 15, 1948

Carter

Rosalynn Smith, b. Aug. 18, 1927; m. July 7, 1946

Reagan

Jane Wyman (Sarah June Fulks), b. Jan. 4, 1914; m.
Futterman 1937; m. Reagan Jan. 24, 1940; m. Kar-
ger 1952

Nancy Davis (Anne Frances Robbins), b. July 6, 1921;
m. Mar. 4, 1952

Bush

Barbara Pierce, b. June 8, 1925; m. Jan. 6, 1945

Clinton

Hillary Rodham, b. Oct. 25, 1947; m. Oct. 11, 1975

BIRTHPLACES OF PRESIDENTS' WIVES

MARTHA WASHINGTON New Kent County, Va.

ABIGAIL ADAMS Weymouth, Mass.

MARTHA JEFFERSON Charles City County, Va.

DOLLEY MADISON Guilford County, N.C.

ELIZABETH MONROE New York, N.Y.

LOUISA ADAMS London, England

RACHEL JACKSON Halifax County, Va.

HANNAH VAN BUREN Kinderhook, N.Y.

ANNA HARRISON Morristown, N.J.

LETITIA TYLER New Kent County, Va.

JULIA TYLER Gardiners Island, N.Y.

SARAH POLK Murfreesboro, Tenn.

MARGARET TAYLOR Calvert County, Md.

ABIGAIL FILLMORE Stillwater, N.Y.

CAROLINA FILLMORE Morristown, N.J.

JANE PIERCE Hampton, N.H.

MARY LINCOLN Lexington, Ky.

ELIZA JOHNSON Leesburg, Tenn.

JULIA GRANT St. Louis, Mo.

LUCY HAYES Chillicothe, Ohio

LUCRETIA GARFIELD Hiram, Ohio

ELLEN ARTHUR Culpeper Court House, Va.

FRANCES CLEVELAND Folsomville, N.Y.

CAROLINE HARRISON Oxford, Ohio

MARY HARRISON Honesdale, Pa.

IDA MCKINLEY Canton, Ohio

ALICE ROOSEVELT Chestnut Hill, Mass.

EDITH ROOSEVELT Norwich, Conn.

HELEN TAFT Cincinnati, Ohio

ELLEN WILSON Savannah, Ga.

EDITH WILSON Wytheville, Va.

FLORENCE HARDING Marion, Ohio

GRACE COOLIDGE Burlington, Vt.

LOU HOOVER Waterloo, Iowa

ELEANOR ROOSEVELT New York, N.Y.

BESS TRUMAN Independence, Mo.

MAMIE EISENHOWER Boone, Iowa

JACQUELINE KENNEDY Southampton, N.Y.

LADY BIRD JOHNSON Karnack, Tex.

PATRICIA NIXON Ely, Nev.

BETTY FORD Chicago, Ill.

ROSALYNN CARTER Plains, Ga.

JANE REAGAN St. Joseph, Mo.

NANCY REAGAN New York, N.Y.

BARBARA BUSH Bronx, N.Y.

HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON Park Ridge, Ill.

THE PRESIDENTS AND THEIR VICE PRESIDENTS

VICE PRESIDENT'S OATH

I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter. So help me God.

PRESIDENTS AND VICE PRESIDENTS

There have been 42 Presidents (41 individuals, with Grover Cleveland counted twice since his two terms were not consecutive), of whom only 37 had Vice Presidents. Four of the men who succeeded to the presidency did not appoint a Vice President to take their place and were not subsequently elected in their own right, as part of a Presidential/Vice President "team." Eight of the 36 remaining Presidents had two different Vice Presidents, and one had three, so there have been 47 separate teams. However, only 45 individuals have held the office of Vice President: Clinton and Calhoun each served under two different Presidents.

The following is a list of the Presidents and their Vice Presidents. Biographical material on each Vice President may be found in Part I in the appropriate presidential section.

Washington

John Adams (first and second terms)

J. Adams

Thomas Jefferson

Jefferson

Aaron Burr (first term)

George Clinton (second term)

Madison

George Clinton (first term)

Elbridge Gerry

Monroe

Daniel D. Tompkins (first and second terms)

J. Q. Adams

John Caldwell Calhoun

Jackson

John Caldwell Calhoun (first term)

Martin Van Buren (second term)

Van Buren

Richard Mentor Johnson

W. H. Harrison

John Tyler

Tyler

Polk

George Mifflin Dallas

Taylor

Millard Fillmore

Fillmore

Pierce

William Rufus De Vane King

Buchanan

John Cabell Breckinridge

Lincoln

Hannibal Hamlin (first term)

Andrew Johnson (second term)

A. Johnson

Grant

Schuyler Colfax (first term)

Henry Wilson (second term)

Hayes

Williams Almon Wheeler

Garfield

Chester Alan Arthur

Arthur

Cleveland (first term)

Thomas Andrews Hendricks

B. Harrison

Levi Parsons Morton

Cleveland (second term)

Adlai Ewing Stevenson

McKinley

Garrett Augustus Hobart (first term)

Theodore Roosevelt (second term)

T. Roosevelt

----- (first term)

Charles Warren Fairbanks (second term)

Taft

James Schoolcraft Sherman

Wilson

Thomas Riley Marshall (first and second terms)

Harding

Calvin Coolidge

Coolidge

----- (first term)

Charles Gates Dawes (second term)

Hoover

Charles Curtis

F. D. Roosevelt

John Nance Garner (first and second terms)

Henry Agard Wallace (third term)

Harry S. Truman (fourth term)

Truman

——— (first term)

Alben William Barkley

Eisenhower

Richard Milhous Nixon (first and second terms)

Kennedy

Lyndon Baines Johnson

L. B. Johnson

——— (first term)

Hubert Horatio Humphrey (second term)

Nixon

Spiro Theodore Agnew (first term; resigned October 10, 1973, after serving 10 months of his second term)

Gerald Rudolph Ford, Jr. (second term; December 6, 1973, sworn in, filling vacancy left by resignation of Spiro Agnew)

Ford

Nelson Aldrich Rockefeller (sworn in December 19, 1974)

Carter

Walter Frederick Mondale

Reagan

George Herbert Walker Bush (first and second terms)

Bush

Dan (James Danforth) Quayle 3rd

Clinton

Al (Albert Arnold) Gore, Jr.

VICE PRESIDENTS—TERMS OF OFFICE AND PRESIDENTS SERVED**1. John Adams**

1789–1797, Washington

2. Thomas Jefferson

1797–1801, J. Adams

3. Aaron Burr

1801–1805, Jefferson

4. George Clinton

1805–1809, Jefferson

1809–1812, Madison

5. Elbridge Gerry

1813–1814, Madison

6. Daniel D. Tompkins

1817–1825, Monroe

John Caldwell Calhoun

1825–1829, J. Q. Adams

1829–1832, Jackson

8. Martin Van Buren

1833–1837, Jackson

9. Richard Mentor Johnson

1837–1841, Van Buren

10. John Tyler

1841, W. H. Harrison

11. George Mifflin Dallas

1845–1849, Polk

12. Millard Fillmore

1849–1850, Taylor

13. William Rufus De Vane King

1853, Pierce

14. John Cabell Breckinridge

1857–1861, Buchanan

15. Hannibal Hamlin

1861–1865, Lincoln

16. Andrew Johnson

1865, Lincoln

17. Schuyler Colfax

1869–1873, Grant

18. Henry Wilson

1873–1875, Grant

19. William Almon Wheeler

1877–1881, Hayes

20. Chester Alan Arthur

1881, Garfield

21. Thomas Andrews Hendricks

1885, Cleveland (first term)

22. Levi Parsons Morton

1889–1893, B. Harrison

23. Adlai Ewing Stevenson

1893–1897, Cleveland (second term)

24. Garret Augustus Hobart

1897–1899, McKinley

25. Theodore Roosevelt

1901, McKinley

26. Charles Warren Fairbanks

1905–1909, T. Roosevelt

27. James Schoolcraft Sherman

1909–1912, Taft

28. Thomas Riley Marshall

1913–1921, Wilson

29. Calvin Coolidge

1921–1923, Harding

30. Charles Gates Dawes

1925-1929, Coolidge

31. Charles Curtis

1929-1933, Hoover

32. John Nance Garner

1933-1941, F. D. Roosevelt

33. Henry Agard Wallace

1941-1945, F. D. Roosevelt

34. Harry S. Truman

1945, F. D. Roosevelt

35. Alben William Barkley

1949-1953, Truman

36. Richard Milhous Nixon

1953-1961, Eisenhower

37. Lyndon Baines Johnson

1961-1963, Kennedy

38. Hubert Horatio Humphrey

1965-1969, L. B. Johnson

39. Spiro Theodore Agnew

1969-1973, Nixon

40. Gerald Rudolph Ford, Jr.

1973-1974, Nixon

41. Nelson Aldrich Rockefeller

1974-1977, Ford

42. Walter Frederick Mondale

1977-1981, Carter

43. George Herbert Walker Bush

1981-1989, Reagan

44. Dan (James Danforth) Quayle 3rd

1989-1993, Bush

45. Al (Albert Arnold) Gore, Jr.

1993- , Clinton

**PRESIDENTS AND VICE PRESIDENTS—
NUMERICAL POSITION**

Although the President and the Vice President are inaugurated at the same ceremony, it does not follow that their numerical position with regard to their offices is the same. As some Vice Presidents have served two Presidents and as some Presidents have had two Vice Presidents, and as some Vice Presidents have succeeded to the presidency without a corresponding Vice President, there is often little relationship in the numerical positions of the Presidents and their Vice Presidents.

The following list shows the numerical order of the Presidents and Vice Presidents whose numbers were the same:

1. Washington, Adams
2. J. Adams, Jefferson
3. Jefferson (first term), Burr
4. Madison, Clinton (second term)
7. Jackson (first term), Calhoun (second term)

11. Polk, Dallas

12. Taylor, Fillmore

16. Lincoln, A. Johnson

18. Grant (second term), Wilson

19. Hayes, Wheeler

20. Garfield, Arthur

25. McKinley (second term), T. Roosevelt

26. T. Roosevelt (second term), Fairbanks

27. Taft, Sherman

28. Wilson, Marshall

29. Harding, Coolidge

30. Coolidge (second term), Dawes

31. Hoover, Curtis

32. F. D. Roosevelt (first and second terms), Garner

**VICE PRESIDENTS—STATES REPRESENTED
AND PARTY AFFILIATIONS****ADAMS** Massachusetts, Federalist**JEFFERSON** Virginia, Democratic-Republican**BURR** New York, Democratic-Republican**CLINTON** New York, Democratic-Republican**GERRY** Massachusetts, Democratic-Republican**TOMPKINS** New York, Democratic-Republican**CALHOUN** South Carolina, Democratic-Republican**VAN BUREN** New York, Democrat**R. M. JOHNSON** Kentucky, Democrat**TYLER** Virginia, Whig**DALLAS** Pennsylvania, Democrat**FILLMORE** New York, Whig**KING** Alabama, Democrat**BRECKINRIDGE** Kentucky, Democrat**HAMLIN** Maine, Republican**A. JOHNSON** Tennessee, Democrat (but nominated and elected with Lincoln on Republican ticket)**COLFAX** Indiana, Republican**WILSON** Massachusetts, Republican**WHEELER** New York, Republican**ARTHUR** New York, Republican**HENDRICKS** Indiana, Democrat**MORTON** New York, Republican**STEVENSON** Illinois, Democrat**HOBART** New Jersey, Republican**T. ROOSEVELT** New York, Republican

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The Washington Post

January 31, 1993, Sunday, Final Edition

SECTION: STYLE; PAGE F1

LENGTH: 1721 words

HEADLINE: First Ladylike, After All; Hillary's Merely the Latest in a Long Line of Partners Who Pitch In

SERIES: Occasional

BYLINE: Carl Sferrazza Anthony, Special to The Washington Post

BODY: The country has never seen a First Lady like her before.

Her husband runs everything past his most trusted partner. She was a key advisor in choosing his Cabinet and staff. She helps draft legislation and puts her own usually more liberal stamp on it.

She is Nellie Taft, Florence Harding, Ellen Wilson, Rosalynn Carter, Eleanor Roosevelt and others.

Indeed, so far the only difference between Hillary Rodham Clinton's political role and that of a number of her predecessors is her honesty about it. The documentable instances of First Ladies exercising political power are voluminous. They are the rules rather than the exception -- as is the quadrennial media feeding frenzy over this.

Smithsonian curator Edith Mayo, who directed the new exhibit "First Ladies: Political Role and Public Image," explains bluntly: "It's very sad but very telling that the media and the public are so pathetically ignorant of women's history that they don't realize that presidential wives since Abigail Adams have been wielding political influence. It's a long-standing, red-blooded American tradition."

And so is the reaction. "Every First Lady who has used her position in this way has been ridiculed or vilified as being deviant from women's proper role or feared as emasculating," Mayo continues. "The furor over Hillary Clinton is but the latest chapter in a theme that runs throughout First Lady history. It is much less about Hillary herself

than it is about America's deep-seated ambivalence, even hostility, toward power in the hands of women."

The First Lady is the wild card of American politics. Her power defies definition. It simply is. Because it's so often flexed privately, the historical record is also elusive. But some prime examples remain. Among the most prominent:

Rosalynn Carter. She has had the most formal role of any First Lady to date. She was particularly active in mental health reforms, serving as "honorary chair" of a presidential commission but working daily to manage 30 separate task forces, conducting national inspections and hearings, and testifying before the Senate health subcommittee.

The result was a thousand-page document, her "compelling mandate for change," which proposed changes in housing, health insurance, Medicare and Medicaid, an anti-discrimination bill of rights, and federal legislation overhauling mental health centers. The report was turned into legislation that she lobbied for. In a July 24, 1980, memo, now in the Carter Library, Stuart Eizenstat, the White House domestic policy adviser, remarks that the First Lady is ready to arm-twist House Speaker Tip O'Neill "to request expedited floor action ... before she leaves for Peru."

She eventually won passage of the Mental Health Systems Act of 1980 and a \$ 47 million increase in funding -- both of which were undone a year later by the Reagan administration.

Ellen Wilson. The first First Lady to have a project turn into federal legislation was the first wife of Woodrow Wilson. Three weeks after his 1913 inauguration, she zeroed in on public housing issues, including an attempt to rid Washington of slum dwellings. She assumed a semi-official post as honorary chair of the National Civic Federation, which drafted a law to renovate or demolish the houses.

While the legislation was being drafted, she also successfully pushed Cabinet members into providing first aid stations, lunchrooms and restrooms for each of their departments. She edited her husband's speeches and often inserted common touches to his lofty philosophies on government. Treasury Secretary William McAdoo called her "the soundest and most influential [adviser] of them all." Navy Secretary Josephus Daniels said he "came to lean upon her wisdom as much as did Wilson ... and she was generally right."

Mrs. Wilson became terminally ill in the summer of 1914. Her housing bill passed on Aug. 7, and she died that afternoon.

And when Wilson suffered a stroke in late 1919, his second wife, Edith, became de facto chief of staff for four months.

Eleanor Roosevelt. Always cited as the most activist First Lady, she was also the most criticized. She worked briefly as the unsalaried deputy director of the Office of Civilian

Defense, an agency she had pushed President Franklin Roosevelt to establish on the eve of World War II. She went to work daily in her office in the Dupont Circle Building, but after she hired a dancer to initiate an exercise program, Congress howled and the media tittered. Because Mrs. Roosevelt suspected that the "more or less abusive" mail she received was aimed at FDR, she resigned. She decided that it was "unwise ... to try a government job."

Even though she remained untitled in government, Eleanor Roosevelt in a sense became the unofficial watchdog for the underclass. Among her initiatives, she ran an experimental West Virginia housing project called Arthurdale, and pushed for reform of the District of Columbia's government. When she testified before the House District Committee, Rep. Jennings Randolph announced, "Mrs. Roosevelt, you are the first First Lady of the land to appear before a congressional committee."

She became FDR's emissary. When he wanted a report on whether the government should try to revive the rum industry in Puerto Rico, he sent Eleanor. As his "eyes and ears," she drew up frank reports, left on his night table, which he used as backgrounders in his meetings.

However much was made of her public actions, Eleanor's private influence had equal impact. She was indirectly responsible for establishing the National Youth Administration, overcoming the president's reluctance. Through Labor Secretary Frances Perkins, an ally, she instigated a women's division of the Civilian Conservation Corps. Privately, she further worked through her own power network of those outside government, from the United Auto Workers' Walter Reuther to public-welfare authority Lillian Wald.

In some respects, Eleanor Roosevelt had it both ways. She best illustrated how a First Lady's actions can have power over public issues. Her public support for desegregation of the armed forces, for example, angered administration advisers who feared alienating Southern Democrats. When her opinions clashed with advisers', she deftly turned the fact that First Lady is an "unofficial" post to her advantage, claiming they were those of a concerned citizen, "a point of view of my own."

She was the conscience of the New Deal. "She continually impressed," said aide Harry Hopkins, that the president was "under moral obligation to see his domestic reforms through ... she hoped neither the president nor I thought it was settled in any way by making speeches."

Nellie Taft and Florence Harding. While Hillary Clinton's ideology follows the social reform views of First Ladies Roosevelt and Carter, she shares a background with two more obscure, if more progressive, women. Her power is similar to that of Taft and Harding, derived from a partnership made even before marriage -- and, in the case of Taft, a career outside of her husband's.

Mrs. Carter's and Mrs. Roosevelt's roles evolved after events in the lives of their husbands led them into politics. Otherwise, they might never have entered politics. Not so Nellie Taft, who worked before marriage as a schoolteacher and mused about becoming treasury secretary, and Florence Harding, who, as a young divorcee with a child, supported herself as a piano teacher from 1881 to 1891, then worked as business, circulation and advertising manager of Harding's Marion (Ohio) Star from 1891 to 1916, at which time, she co-managed Warren Harding's Senate campaign.

After middle school, Nellie Herron determined to earn her own living. She insisted on paying half of the rented buggy when courted by William Howard Taft -- whom she came to know at her political and economic salons. He said she "chafed under the conventionalities of society" and "wanted to do something in life. ... Her eagerness for knowledge of all kinds puts me to shame. Her capacity for work is just wonderful."

During a trip to Washington with Nellie, Taft wondered "if you and I will ever be there in any official capacity? Oh, yes, I forgot; of course you shall when you become secretary of the treasury." In making his case for marriage, he pleaded, "I will labor for our joint advancement if you only let me."

Though she stopped working when she married, Nellie pursued her ambitions through Taft. She singlemindedly diverted him from his ambition to serve on the Supreme Court to her ambition for the presidency, and throughout his 1908 campaign it was Nellie who shaped his platform and speeches, and bickered with President Theodore Roosevelt until he supported her husband.

Nellie admitted frustration in her first weeks, as traditional duties competed with her desire to get moving on "policies." The new president wrote at the time, "With the troubles of selecting a Cabinet and the difficulties in respect to the revision of the tariff, I feel just a bit like a fish out of water. However, as my wife is the politician ... she will be able to meet all these issues."

Taft called her "my dearest, and best critic." One March 25, 1909, note of his in the Taft Papers at the Library of Congress was even addressed, "Memorandum for Mrs. Taft -- the real President from the nominal President." It was a memo regarding one of her personnel decisions: "If you are going to give Gist Blair a serious place in this Administration you had better talk with the Attorney General about him."

Nellie successfully vetoed Henry White and Nick Longworth as ambassadors to England and China, and got Julia Lathrop appointed Children's Bureau director. When the Civil Service Commission reported to Taft that it could not recommend an executive order granting a job for a particular individual, an attached note added, "in view of Mrs. Taft's interest the President may wish to issue one."

Chief Usher Ike Hoover recalled, "It was not an uncommon thing to see her taking part in political and official conferences. ... Speaker Cannon, consulting jointly with the President and Mrs. Taft ... [she was] always present and taking a leading part in the

discussions. It was a familiar sight ... her and the president in a corner of the room with heads together."

GRAPHIC: PHOTO, FLORENCE HARDING CO-MANAGED HER HUSBAND'S CAMPAIGN FOR SENATOR.

TYPE: FEATURE

SUBJECT: FIRST LADY

NAMED-PERSONS: NELLIE TAFT; FLORENCE HARDING; ELLEN WILSON;
ROSALYNN CARTER; ELEANOR ROOSEVELT; HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

The Christian Science Monitor

April 6, 1988, Wednesday

HEADLINE: US to First Ladies: wear a hundred hats, just don't buy them

BYLINE: Charlotte Saikowski, Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

DATELINE: Washington

HIGHLIGHT:

The First Lady's job mirrors the expanding role of women. But White House spouses walk a tight rope between political concern and showing too much political prowess.

BODY:

Dolley Madison promoted the rebuilding of Washington after it was burned by the British.

Edith Wilson traveled to Paris after World War I to observe the signing of the peace treaty (which she did seated behind draperies).

Eleanor Roosevelt held an official government position.

Rosalynn Carter attended Cabinet meetings.

Nancy Reagan acted as host of an international conference on drug abuse.

From Martha Washington to Nancy Reagan, the nation's "First Ladies" have played an important role in the functioning of the US presidency. And, according to James Rosebush, Mrs. Reagan's former chief of staff, that role is expanding.

"Today, with the evolving role of women in the workplace, the rising expectations placed on women in society, the increasing degree to which women are involved in substantive decisionmaking from household management to foreign policy, the duties of the First Lady have changed dramatically," says Mr. Rosebush in a slim new volume called "First Lady, Public Wife." "No more is she just an official hostess for the White House.

Recent presidential marriages have reflected contemporary views of what is an acceptable sharing of responsibilities between married partners."

The 1988 presidential race is focused almost exclusively on the men aspiring to sit in the Oval Office. But judging from history, the wife of the aspiring candidate also deserves scrutiny. For she can be either an asset or a liability in performing the demanding "job" of First Lady.

Rosebush defines the functions of that job as "manager, diplomat, hostess, champion of causes, political partner, wife, and mother." But each First Lady writes her own job description, and the task is not an easy one, given the ambivalent attitudes of the American public.

"People want to idealize the First Lady," Rosebush says, "but they don't want her to idealize herself. They want her to work on causes but to save enough energy to entertain impeccably, speak foreign languages, travel comfortably (but inexpensively), and maintain a happy home life. And what's more, they are ready to criticize severely any First Lady who cannot perform well in most of these functions or any First Lady who oversteps in the interpretation of her role."

Not all First Ladies - and there have been 51 - espoused social causes or became political confidantes of their husbands. Many concentrated only on their families and on presiding over social functions, a huge undertaking in itself. A few, like Martha Washington and Louisa Adams, found the presidential life either dull or constricting.

But many of the best-remembered First Ladies relished their role and sometimes widened their activities in impressive ways. Ellen Wilson was the first to take on a social project, promoting congressional legislation to improve the ramshackle back alleys of Washington that housed the city's poor blacks. Grace Coolidge helped wounded veterans in World War I. Eleanor Roosevelt took on the cause of racial justice at a national level and held press conferences.

Mrs. Reagan's antidrug crusade began in 1979, when campaign advisers urged her to become identified with an issue. Coming out of a medical background (her father was a doctor), she herself chose the field of drug abuse, and, although politics was the initial motivation, "the problem drew her in" and "changed her," writes Rosebush. She was the first to hire a staff of experts and in the past eight years she has logged tens of thousands of miles and untold hours giving speeches. She also refused to be a spokesman for the government's antidrug effort, electing to focus entirely on private-sector efforts.

"No one cued her to take this approach, it was instinctive," says Rosebush, who directed Mrs. Reagan's staff from 1982 to 1986.

Mrs. Reagan has sparked considerable comment about her political influence at the White House. But as her former chief of staff notes, her ambitions were for the President, not herself. During the 1976 and 1980 campaigns Mrs. Reagan often attended strategy meetings. After the first presidential debate, she suggested a new approach to the President's advisers. She has also brought pressure to bear on personnel decisions, most

■ Mary McGrory

Bush vs. Clinton: the election of the couples

WASHINGTON — The way things are shaping up, what we may have in the fall is history's first battle of the couples.

It won't be just Bill vs. George; it's going to be the Bushes vs. the Clintons, and Katie-bar-the-door.

George Bush and Bill Clinton have established themselves as candidates who will do just about anything to win. Their wives, in their different ways, are pretty much the same.

Barbara Bush showed in 1984 that if cattiness is called for, she's ready. She said Geraldine Ferraro reminded her of something that rhymes with "rich." She recovered from this show of claws. She is universally revered as a lady who looks and acts like everyone's dream of a grandmother, and also everyone's idea of a first lady.

She is, in fact, the most popular figure in the country. In a season when other politicians, including her husband, have hit the skids in public esteem, she stands at a shining 75 percent. She may be the president's best hope of re-election.

Hillary Clinton is new to the national scene. She has made a stunning impression, both good and bad. The country met her at the supremely awkward moment of her *60 Minutes* appearance right after Gennifer Flowers burst all over the New Hampshire primary. Here was this good-looking woman insisting that she loved her husband and that the state of their union is good.

Barbara Bush says that she leaves the government "to my husband and other people who are elected to office." Hillary Clinton does not. She is not just a corporate lawyer, a children's advocate (until recently chairwoman of the board of the Children's Defense Fund) and a teacher of law. She is as committed a policy freak as her husband, and

she can discourse just as fluently about the country and its needs for 35 minutes without a note or a pause for breath.

Barbara Bush seems to glory in being the wife of a prominent man. Hillary Clinton fights being identified as "wife of." In the New Hampshire primary, while other candidates' spouses, Ruth Harkin and Nikki Tsongas — both of them lawyers, too, — made numerous joint appearances, Hillary Clinton firmly declined to join in.

Some of her feminist sisters find an idol in Hillary Clinton; the traditionalists, among them some men, have a problem since she made her famous remark — "I could have stayed home and baked cookies." Housewives felt insulted and dismissed, even though it was easy to see she wasn't putting them down, but defending her choice.

The case against the Clintons was put by an unhappy New York primary voter who said outside his polling place: "I think he's a liar, and I think she makes Nancy Reagan look like Snow White."

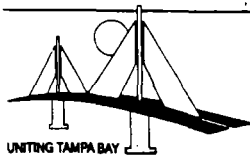
Nancy Reagan has probably contributed, involuntarily, to Barbara Bush's runaway approval rating. Americans suspected that Mrs. Reagan and her astrologer were manipulating the president. Her volunteer work against drugs was something no contemporary without an armed guard — she had one in the Secret Service — could have expected to do. Anyone can emulate Mrs. Bush. She reads stories to children who don't get read to; she fights illiteracy.

Hillary Clinton teaches law school classes along the campaign trail. She was a star graduate of the Yale Law School. Mrs. Bush dropped out of college to marry George Bush.

Hillary Clinton, who is so brainy and so political, may have made a more serious misstep when she indirectly took on Barbara Bush. In a *Vanity Fair* interview, which she unaccountably called "a private conversation," she complained about a double standard in the press. She said of Barbara's husband, "I understand he has a Gennifer, too."

What this said is that if the campaign gets nasty on the Bush side, a Clinton is ready to fire back. Notice has been served in the War of the Couples, as this could turn out to be, that this is no Kitty and Michael revisited. It's going to be take-no-prisoners time.

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UNITING TAMPA BAY

W.L. Straub 1901 - 1912
Paul Poynter 1912 - 1938
Nelson Poynter 1938 - 1978
Eugene Patterson 1978 - 1988
Founded 1884

St. Petersburg Times

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W11

Christmas in the White House

Albert J. Menendez

Christmas in the White House

Albert J. Menendez

Local actors volunteered their time and wore flamboyant costumes designed by Henri Bendel. There was a chef with an onion necklace, a queen with a castle on her head, a blackbird, a dove, a lady in a tricorne hat, and two mimes in ruffles and skullcaps, who did tricks with their faces.

Everyone was served cider and cookies, and each child received a present from the First Lady. Each one also received a calico elephant or angel.

As President Ronald Reagan said in his 1981 Christmas message: "Christmas means so much because of one special child. But Christmas also reminds us that all children are special, that they are gifts from God, gifts beyond price that mean more than any presents money can buy. In their love and laughter, in our hopes for their future, lies the true meaning of Christmas."

FL - Gene

4

O Christmas Tree!

When the President of the United States lights the National Christmas Tree this year, he will be continuing a grand tradition.

The Christmas tree is part and parcel of almost every American home today. But it was not always so. What Charles Dickens once called "that pretty little German toy" did not become a well-established feature on the American Christmas landscape until the 1840's. Holly and evergreens sufficed before Americans discovered and adopted an ornament long beloved by the German people, the decorated tree. This was true at the President's House.

It was a sad and lonely President, Franklin Pierce, who first erected a small tree in the White House in 1853. He invited the Sunday school class of the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church to join him and the First Lady for a celebration of the holiday. The Pierces were still in mourning for their son, Benny, the victim of a railway accident shortly before the inauguration. But President Pierce insisted on making the occasion bright and cheery for his visitors.

The Lincolns, the Grants, and the Hayeses all enjoyed Christmas trees, so much so that Benjamin Harrison could refer to the custom as "old-fashioned." Edna Coleman, in her chatty account of the human side of the presidency, described the Harrisons' 1889 Christmas tree: "A very large, gorgeous tree was put up in the library, in the trimming of which the President, his family and the staff assisted. It carried toys not only for the children of the family but for everyone attached to the White House and their families. Around it, too, were piled the hundreds of gifts and remembrances sent by friends and presidential admirers."

An ardent conservationist, Teddy Roosevelt initially forbade any tree at the White House. But his children were so disap-

pointed and public opinion so hostile that he gradually relented. One year Roosevelt's son Kermit disobeyed his father's orders and placed a tree in his private quarters on the second floor. He decorated it himself and stocked it with presents. The President's heart was touched, and he no longer prohibited a tree. His friend and fellow conservationist Gifford Pinchot convinced him that cutting the trees down would not drive them into extinction.

The year 1923 saw the inauguration of a custom that has taken on national significance and has lasted until today: the lighting of the National Community Christmas Tree by the President. Calvin Coolidge began this delightful ceremony, but it was not he who originated it. Mr. Frederick M. Feiker, an adviser to Herbert Hoover, suggested that the President light a Christmas tree on behalf of all Americans and in recognition of the spiritual significance of Christmas.

In a letter to his daughter, dated March 8, 1932, Feiker tells how it all began. "The Society for Electrical Development was interested to have as many people use electric lights at Christmas time as possible, so I thought of this idea of having the National Christmas Tree at Washington, which would stimulate other people to have outdoor Christmas trees. In order to get this started, we had to get the President of the United States to light the tree. If you can get the President of the United States two years in succession to do a thing, he will always do it. The first year, I arranged to have Mr. Coolidge, who was President, presented with a tree from Vermont. Middlebury College donated the tree. It was shipped by express by the alumni of the College, and set up in Washington by a committee formed of the various local organizations, which I also arranged. We collected about \$5,000 from the electrical industry to install the underground lighting cables to the spot behind the White House where the tree was erected.

"I went with the Senator from Vermont to see Mr. Coolidge, and secured his agreement to light the tree. We got the National Broadcasting Company to broadcast the ceremony. Mr. Coolidge refused to speak, but he did agree to push the button."

In a related ceremony, carols were sung from the North Portico of the White House. The precursor of this custom occurred in 1916, when Mr. and Mrs. Woodrow Wilson walked across the street to the Treasury Building to hear carols sung. The Wilsons' appearance was unexpected, but it may have been prompted by the fact that the President's daughter Margaret was the soloist.

Neither event received much attention from press or public.

The National Christmas Tree has had a hard time finding a permanent home. It remained in Sherman Square, which is just east of East Executive Drive, from 1924 to 1933. Then it was moved to Lafayette Park, on the north side of the White House, from 1934 to 1938. It went back to the Ellipse in 1939 and 1940. But Mrs. FDR liked the South Lawn of the White House, so she could feel "close" to the people. It was erected there from 1941 to 1953. Finally, in 1954 it returned to the Ellipse, then called The President's Park, where it has remained ever since.

There were some sound reasons for all this moving. In 1934, E. Street was enlarged, necessitating a reshaping of Sherman Square. There was not enough space to accommodate the growing crowds that came to the ceremony. In 1941, the Secret Service wanted to minimize risks to the President's life and thought that holding the event on the White House lawn would make their job easier. Some Secret Service officials wanted to cancel the ceremony for the duration of World War II, but the Christmas-loving Chief Executive vetoed that suggestion.

In 1924, the ceremony was again held on Christmas Eve. The tree was a large Norway spruce, and it was lighted with electric candles.

The tree-lighting ceremony was almost canceled, however, after only one year. In early 1924, President Coolidge made a statement to the American Forestry Association against cutting trees for Christmas. (Shades of Teddy Roosevelt!) Fred Feiker was aghast when he heard the news. He told his wife that the lovely new Christmas custom would not survive. She immediately retorted, "Why not plant a living Christmas tree?" So they did.

Will Hays, then chairman of the Republican National Committee and later the morality czar in Hollywood, was also chairman of the Amawalk nurseries. Hays arranged to send a living tree to be planted on Sherman Square. Then the President consented to light it. So the dour Mr. Coolidge did not let down the growing crowds who now looked forward to the annual ceremony.

The next year, the crowds were larger, an amplifier was erected, and the ceremony was broadcast nationwide by NBC. At 6 P.M. President Coolidge touched the button that illuminated the "Great Yule Tree." As the lights came on, hundreds of motorists blew their horns. Then all was silent while the U.S. Marine Band played hymns and carols for a full hour. Inside the White House,



Herbert Hoover and his family at one of the earliest tree-lighting ceremonies. 1929

the Coolidges erected three trees of their own. One was decorated with Mrs. Coolidge's "lucky" white ivory elephants.

In 1927, the crowds were larger than ever. A coronet soloist played "Cantique de Noel" (also called "O Holy Night"), a haunting melody that remained on the annual program into the 1960s. The tree had five hundred lights and two thousand reflecting jewels. Trumpets played, horns blared, and church bells rang. Later that evening a choir from the Interstate Commerce Commission sang carols.

The following year the festivities were held at 8 P.M., which added a romantic quality. Most of the scene was in darkness. Lights shone only on the stage from which the President spoke. Fully four thousand Washingtonians and tourists surrounded the tree and collected on the steps of the Treasury Building.

As the tree was suffused in a blaze of glowing colors, Boy Scout buglers signaled the beginning of Christmas Eve. Arthur S. Witcomb gave his usual stirring coronet solo of "O Holy Night," and the U.S. Marine Band played some then-popular melodies, such as "Christmas Echoes" and "Bells Across the Snow." Before the presidential party departed, a Boy Scout presented to Mrs. Coolidge a large engraved card, which declared that she "had always been gracious and had won the hearts of the people of Washington." It was a golden evening, that last Coolidge Christmas in an era of prosperity.

Nothing very eventful took place during the four times the Hoovers presided over the ceremonies. In 1929, fifty Washington school children serenaded the President. In 1931, Pepco, the local electric company, took over the electrification process. In the Hoovers' last year a "Singing Christmas Tree" was featured. That year, also, a group of positive-spirited Washingtonians called upon the citizenry to sing carols as a way of fighting the Depression and the spirit of gloom that pervaded the country. Handbills blanketed the city.

In 1933, the National Capital Parks Office took over all arrangements for planting and caring for the tree. For several years they used trees planted in Lafayette Park. Then they decided to

transplant a tree each year from the Mount Vernon Parkway. It was returned to its homesite on New Year's Day.

The crowds increased during the Franklin Roosevelt years. The President was immensely popular, particularly in Washington. In 1935, glass stars shone like diamonds from the tree. New platforms, candles, and an eight-sided fence were added in 1936.

The next year two hundred Christmas trees were placed in the city's poor neighborhoods, to be illuminated at the same time that the President pushed the button in Lafayette Park on Christmas Eve. Mrs. Roosevelt played a role in the citywide activities preceding the main event.

The tree of 1938 was called a "dream of beauty" because of magnificent new lighting donated by the Electric Institute of Washington. Mercury vapor floodlights added a new dimension and quality to the illumination. Kresge's Department Store donated ornaments and chimes.

The following year a soaking rain drenched the 2,500 hardy souls who braved the elements and watched the ceremonies in person. One hundred and sixty radio stations carried the event.

President Roosevelt told the crowds in 1940 that he was hoping to move the ceremony to the White House lawn the following year so that he could wish all Americans a Merry Christmas from his own house. Of course, Mrs. Roosevelt and the Secret Service also had something to do with that decision.

The years of World War II brought about some changes in the annual event. The ceremonies were now on the White House South Lawn. The Secret Service screened all the people who were admitted. Tickets were hard to come by, and there were reserved seat stands for the fortunate few.

Britain's valiant Prime Minister Winston Churchill was quite a hit during his surprise appearance in 1941. Churchill had secretly traveled across the Atlantic for an important war council with President Roosevelt. It was so secretive, in fact, that FDR did not tell Eleanor until Christmas Eve that Mr. Churchill and his party would be arriving that day!

That Christmas was overshadowed by the horrible events abroad, which had inexorably drawn the United States into a world war against the Axis Powers. Pearl Harbor was a very recent memory. Most of Europe groaned under the swastika. For millions of American families, the fear of deprivation and wartime dislocations, of death to loved ones, was now ever-present.

The war spirit had pervaded the White House. Air-raid shelters were being dug on the White House lawn, and heavily armed soldiers paraded endlessly through the grounds. Police and Secret Service agents stood watch. Important officials came and went. America was again at war.

But it was still Christmas, and Christmas was part of what we were fighting for. Mr. Roosevelt welcomed a crowd of thousands who had been admitted to the White House grounds for the annual Christmas Eve lighting of the National Christmas Tree. Mr. Churchill was at his side. The crowd seemed more reverent, more attentive, than in years past. The message was broadcast to the nation. Mr. Roosevelt said, in part, "Against enemies who preach the principles of hate and practice them, we set our faith in human love and in God's care for us and all men everywhere."

The Prime Minister then made a brief statement. He said: "Let the children have their night of fun and laughter. By our sacrifice and daring, these same children shall not be robbed of their inheritance, or denied the right to live in a free and decent world."

Along with the crowd the two leaders of the Allied Forces then sang Christmas carols and the two national anthems.

On Christmas Day, the President took Mr. Churchill to worship services at Foundry Methodist Church. Though both were Episcopalians, Mr. Roosevelt told his Secretary of Labor, Frances Perkins, that he wanted the Prime Minister "to hear some good-old Methodist hymn-singing" because no one, he thought, sang hymns so lustily as the Methodists.

The President also issued a proclamation making New Year's Day "a day of prayer, of asking forgiveness for our shortcomings of the past, of consecration to the tasks of the present, of asking God's help in days to come."

On New Year's Day, the Prime Minister was again the President's guest for worship services, this time at Old Christ Church in Alexandria, Virginia, the Episcopal parish where George Washington often worshiped. They sat together in Washington's pew.

Mr. Roosevelt issued a statement on the national day of prayer that said, in part: "We are confident in our devotion to our country, in our love of freedom, in our inheritance of courage. But our strength, as the strength of all men everywhere, is of greater avail as God upholds us.

"We need his guidance that this people may be humble in

spirit but strong in the conviction of the right, steadfast to endure sacrifices and brave to achieve a victory of liberty and peace."

Later in the day, Roosevelt and Churchill went to Mount Vernon, George Washington's beautiful estate on the Potomac. It was raining, but the house was dressed in Christmas finery. Standing beside a red-brick tomb, Mr. Churchill bared his head and placed a red, white, and blue wreath on the grave of our first President.

For security reasons the tree was unlighted in 1942 and 1943. Ornaments were donated by various service clubs around the country. A tag on each ornament listed the name of a U.S. fighting man overseas, a touching remembrance from the folks back home. Some ornaments included photographs of a loved one, a son, brother, or husband, fighting on some faraway battlefield.

By 1945, when Harry Truman first presided, the ceremony was carefully orchestrated. Each minute was accounted for. The program looked like this:

THE LIGHTING
OF THE
NATIONAL COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS TREE, 1945
THE WHITE HOUSE LAWN

Monday, December 24, 1945, at 4:30 P.M.

Timed Program

4:30-4:57	Marine Band Concert	27 minutes
4:57-5:00	Carols by Washington Choral Society	3 minutes
5:00-5:03	Arrival of the President and his party	3 minutes
5:03-5:05	Invocation—Rt. Rev. Mons. Thos. G. Smyth...	2 minutes
5:05-5:08	Introductory Remarks, Brig. Gen. Gordon R. Young, National Chairman.....	3 minutes
5:08-5:11	Greetings to the President and Mrs. Truman, by Boy and Girl Scouts	3 minutes
5:11-5:15	Carols	4 minutes
5:15-5:16	Lighting of the Tree by the President.....	1 minute
5:16-5:22	President's Christmas Greeting to the Nation.	6 minutes
5:22-5:24	"Cantique de Noel", Cornet Solo	2 minutes
5:24-5:26	Carol	2 minutes
5:26-5:27	Benediction—Rev. Dr. C. W. Cranford	1 minute
5:27-5:28:30	The National Anthem	1½ minutes

But the Trumans showed little interest in the event. The President wanted to be home in Independence, Missouri, on Christmas Eve and did not even appear at the 1948, 1949, and 1951 ceremonies.

An article in *The Washington Post* for January 9, 1952, was headlined, "Yule Absence of President Is Deplored." Miss Sibyl Baker, assistant superintendent of the District of Columbia Recreation Board, urged that efforts be made to "rehabilitate the Community Christmas Tree." She said it was "regrettable that the custom of having the President light the tree has about disappeared."

Genuine fears were expressed that the nearly thirty-year-old tradition would be ended. For when the President did not appear, the crowds dwindled. Miss Baker's records showed that attendance had been seriously affected by the President's absence. Would the event die?

The Christmas ceremony received a one-year reprieve when Dwight Eisenhower became President. The tree-lighting was held on the White House lawn in 1953, but the large and friendly crowds were forced to remain behind the iron fence. Only a lucky few received permission to view the events close up. Much criticism was voiced.

But a new lease on life occurred in 1954. An entire restructuring of the annual tree-lighting ceremony was effected. For one thing, the date was pushed back to December 17. For another, the site was the much more spacious Ellipse, called The President's Park in those days. Finally, the event was renamed "The Christmas Pageant of Peace." Ceremonies lasted until January 6, Epiphany or Twelfth Night, the traditional ending of the Christmas season.

The changes were felicitous. Linking the tree-lighting to the yearning of the American people for peace created much more attention nationwide. The event began to take on great symbolic significance. It was now televised nationally.

The organizers were animated by a positive principle. They said: "The Pageant of Peace is a voluntary expression of American citizens of every creed and race to dramatize the Christmas Message 'Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men.' It is organized to foster friendship and understanding among all peoples; to reflect the unity of purpose that emanates from the diversity of traditions and backgrounds of mankind."

President Eisenhower was warmly supportive. He encouraged the efforts and looked forward to his participation each year. Twenty-two nations and twenty-seven states and territories donated small trees to grace the Pathway of Peace, which flanked the walkway leading to the gigantic National Community Christmas Tree. The large tree was donated by the State of Michigan.

The decorations were typical of America of the 1950s. Mr. Leonard Johnson of Smethport, Pennsylvania, loaned the Pageant of Peace Citizens Committee a life-size Santa Claus, eight reindeer, and an electrically operated Christmas display.

The ceremony became more elaborate each year. Citizens groups were involved in planning the many activities that surrounded it throughout much of December and early January. The organizers even set up a permanent office and a nonprofit corporation, called the Christmas Pageant of Peace, at 1616 K Street in the heart of downtown Washington.

In 1957, a gas-powered sleigh manned by Santa Claus carried children on rides near the great tree, a 60-foot gift from Minnesota. The Voice of America carried the ceremony overseas.

Bigger and better seemed the bywords. Now every state donated a small tree for the Pathway of Peace. A life-sized nativity scene, floodlighted at night, was set up in 1954 and remained a popular attraction until a law suit concerning "establishment of religion" necessitated its removal in 1973.

Back at the White House, the Eisenhowers set a new record for the number of Christmas trees used in decorating. In 1959, there were twenty-six trees! Lillian Rogers Parks said: "There was even one in the laundry room and another in the maids' sitting room. And David had his own private tree for his presents in the children's quarters on the third floor. That's because he had awakened one year at 3 A.M. and gotten the President and everyone up at that horrible hour with his squealing over the presents under the tree."

In 1962 the General Electric Company donated 4,000 ornaments and 5,000 lights for the 65-foot blue spruce given by Colorado and for the fifty-three smaller trees. That year, also, eight reindeer from Washington's National Zoological Park took up residence on the Ellipse for the duration of the pageant. A huge Yule log burned night and day for the comfort of participants.

The U.S. Army Chorus and Band kicked off the fifteen-day pageant with a seasonal concert at Constitution Hall on December

15. Traditional music was sung throughout the day on the Ellipse. Churches of all denominations, civic groups, labor and government organizations, and embassies all pitched in to make the pageant a success—a pattern that has been repeated every year.

Jacqueline Kennedy made a few innovations at the White House. Instead of the "Silver Tree" in the East Room, traditionally decorated with white electric candles and silver tinsel, Mrs. Kennedy erected a "Nutcracker" tree and placed it in the Blue Room. Sugarplum fairies, dancing flowers, flutes, and snowflakes replaced the traditional balls and tinsel.

For their last White House Christmas, the Lyndon Johnsons erected a gingerbread tree. It was a 20-foot white pine trimmed in nineteenth-century American style, featuring gingerbread cookies. It, too, graced the Blue Room.

Two years later, the White Mountain Apache Indians of Arizona donated a stately 75-foot Colorado blue spruce. It was the first tree ever given by an American Indian Tribal Council.

The arrival of the National Christmas Tree has taken on a ceremony of its own. The 1965 tree arrived on an 80-foot railroad flatcar and was moved from the old Baltimore and Ohio Railroad yards in Georgetown to the Ellipse. Pepco provided its largest crane to lift the tree from the flatcar onto a waiting truck. A five-foot-deep hole had been prepared for the tree, and it was supported by wires and cables. The trimming took several days. Later, Mrs. Gerald Ford found it exciting to wait for the arrival of the White House tree too. This she placed in the Blue Room.

Since President Lyndon Johnson was touring Asia and cheering U.S. troops in Vietnam in 1965, Vice-President Hubert Humphrey presided. In 1961, then Vice-President Johnson had subbed for President Kennedy, when JFK had flown to Palm Beach to be with his stricken father.

In 1967 a choral group from a foreign country made its first appearance. The Festival Singers of Toronto, Canada, sang "Now, O Zion, Gladly Rise" and the "Wassail Song." President Johnson brought his dog Yuki to the lighting ceremony, but the frisky animal could not sit still and had to be led off the stage by a presidential aide.

Mrs. Richard Nixon is responsible for several lovely customs. It was she who first established the candlelight tours of the White House at Christmastime. Thousands of visitors descend upon the President's House each year from 10 A.M. to 12 noon on Tuesdays



*Lynda Johnson Robb and her children
enjoy the 1968 "gingerbread tree"*

through Saturdays. It is widely agreed that the White House looks more beautiful at Christmas than at any other time. Mrs. Nixon felt that visitors would appreciate the decorations more if they could be viewed by the soft glow of candlelight, so the White House announced that visitors would be admitted for several additional hours on two evenings during the holiday season. This innovation has proved to be popular, and the Fords, Carters, and Reagans have continued it. The White House draws about 10,000 tourists during the Christmas season, which usually begins around December 7 or 8.

Patricia Nixon personally supervised the Christmas decorations during her first year as First Lady, in 1969. She made numerous changes. For the first time in twenty-five years, green wreaths and candles were placed in all sixteen windows facing Pennsylvania Avenue. Another first was the hanging of red, blue, and gold balls from the chandeliers in the halls, which reflected the light of candles that wore red-satin sleeves. These were old family traditions, Mrs. Nixon explained. The whole mansion seemed awash in poinsettias, holly, and greens. Red-velvet reindeer with silver antlers were placed on the marble mantels in the East Room.

The tree in the foyer was decorated with eight-inch velvet and satin Christmas balls embossed with the flowers of each of the fifty states.

There were some problems at the Pageant of Peace, however. For the first time since the ceremony had begun, almost fifty years before, the President was heckled by a chanting crowd of antiwar protesters. Mr. Nixon was forced to raise his voice during his remarks. When the President talked about the blessings of prosperity and his hopes for peace, the two hundred protesters began jeering loudly. About one-half hour before the President's arrival, U.S. Park Police arrested eight adults and one teenager on disorderly conduct charges.

Then the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) tried to remove the nativity scene from the Ellipse. The ACLU, representing three clergymen, an atheist, and a leader of the American Ethical Society, claimed that government sponsorship of a distinctively Christian symbol amounted to an unconstitutional establishment of religion. The pageant sponsors, who had an exclusive permit from the Interior Department for all events on the Ellipse, countered that the nativity scene was a "reminder of our spiritual heritage."

The ACLU sought to block construction of the crèche in 1969 until the constitutional issues could be resolved. The U.S. Court of Appeals ruled on December 12, 1969, that the crèche be allowed that year. The case dragged on for almost four years. Finally on September 26, 1973, the Court of Appeals ruled in favor of the plaintiffs and against the crèche. The Department of the Interior and the National Park Service, both government agencies, were responsible for the program, so the court held that such sponsorship was tantamount to government support for religion.

The three-judge panel ruled that the nativity scene had to be dropped from the pageant or the government had to end its role in the display in order to limit "excessive entanglement" between government and religion. So, the crèche vanished in 1973.

In 1970, the tree was trouble-dogged. The train bringing it to Washington was involved in not one but two derailments. It finally limped into town on November 25. Then, on December 6, high winds and freezing rain tore into the national capital and felled many trees. One of its victims was the 78-foot spruce from South Dakota. It was blown flat on its side. A number of persons who had gone to the Ellipse to watch the trimming had to flee quickly as the tree swayed and then tumbled to the ground.

The tree finally made it to the ceremonies. President Richard Nixon also had a little help at the annual lighting ceremony. He walked into the throng of 10,000 and selected a tiny five-year-old boy, André Proctar, to help him push the button. A driving rain quickly reduced the crowd. As the rain-drenched crowd began to file out, the President concluded by saying, "If you're not all completely doused, before we leave, let's sing 'Joy to the World!'" The few hardy souls remaining sang lustily.

In 1974, the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation offered to decorate the Blue Room tree with thousands of antique hand-carved wooden ornaments. Betty Ford said she "breathed a great sigh of relief." (In 1970 and 1971 Saks Fifth Avenue had trimmed the tree.)

International events have a way of spoiling the simple joys of

The main tree for the Nixons' 1970 Christmas



Christmas. In 1979 and again in 1980, President Jimmy Carter left the giant Ellipse tree in darkness, except for the star on top, as a symbol of America's anger and disgust at the Iranian seizure of American citizens and the holding of them as hostages. There were lights on the fifty smaller trees surrounding the National Christmas Tree, however. In 1979 Mr. Carter lighted a menorah in Lafayette Park, given by the Jewish Community. The menorah symbolizes Hanukkah, an eight-day celebration generally taking place near Christmas.

Betty Ford said that the White House became a "fabulous fairyland" at Christmas. Many people would agree.

In 1981, the main tree in the Blue Room was 19½ feet high and was decorated by handmade ornaments contributed by the Museum of American Folk Art in New York. It was topped by Gabriel the Archangel. There were two trees with real candles (unlighted) in the North Entrance Hall and six trees with white lights in the East Room. Nancy Reagan spent part of two days decorating the Blue Room tree. The Reagans also decorated a tree for their private quarters on the second floor. Mrs. Reagan said the President would help because "he's pretty good at it."

The White House is always awash with poinsettias, holly, and evergreens. Dorothy Temple, the White House florist, and thirty volunteers decorated the old house in 1981. One of the White House chefs, Hans Raffert, made the traditional gingerbread house and added a walkway made out of jelly beans. The doll-house, created by interior designer Aline Koplin Gray of Philadelphia, and the exquisite Italian baroque crèche, given by Mrs. Charles W. Engelhard, Jr., to Lady Bird Johnson in 1967, both graced the Blue Room.

Ronald Reagan turned on the lights on the giant Colorado spruce on the Ellipse from the White House on December 17. The threat of an assassination from a Libyan hit squad made it impossible for the President to appear in person. The National Christmas Tree had 10,000 lights, blue being the dominant color. An unusual decoration consisted of thirteen big triangle-shaped stars, each representing one of the original colonies.

Mr. Reagan delivered a special Christmas message to the American people on December 23 from the Oval Office, which was decorated with evergreens, red candles, and poinsettias.

5 Parties

It would be a rare Christmas without a party of some sort. Parties at the White House during the Christmas season began in the early days of the presidency, though without some of the gusto of today's festivities.

The custom throughout the nineteenth century and until the Coolidge Administration was for the President to hold a "levee" on New Year's Day. This was a stiff, formal gathering in which the President greeted guests at the door, shook their hands and engaged in a bit of conversation. In the informal early days of the Republic, anyone who wished would be admitted to the White House. A similar levee was held on July 4.

In her biography of Abigail Adams, Janet Whitney describes the first levee ever held at the White House in Washington:

"In January 1801 the first New Year reception was held in the President's House. Many candles and roaring fires did their best to make a festive air. The President and his wife received their guests in the beautiful oval room, with their red furniture from Auteuil, and gave Washington its first sensation of being a society. Foreign ministers wore their orders, gentlemen their snowy powder, their bags and swords. Ladies decorated the scene with their elaborate dresses. Washington, D.C., took a definite step from looking like a trading post to looking like the capital of a great nation."

The first record we have of a grand Christmas party is that of 1811, when vivacious Dolly Madison was First Lady. (A children's party when John Adams was President is described in Ch. 3, "The Pitter-Patter of Little Feet.") The coveted invitations to guests read simply, "President Madison and I would be greatly honored to have you dine with us on Christmas evening."

On December 23, 1874, President and Mrs. Grant held a Christmas dinner in honor of the King of Hawaii. The White House was brilliantly illuminated. The East Room was described as "brilliant beyond all precedent" and "magnificent." In the Green Room was a new life-size picture of General Grant on horseback. It had been painted in New Orleans and presented to the President for Christmas. New crystal chandeliers gave an added beauty to the room and picture.

Teddy Roosevelt's last Christmas in the White House, in 1908, was the scene of a special party. His seventeen-year-old daughter Ethel's debut on December 28 was called by the press "the grandest Christmas Party since the Civil War."

One account says, "The entire suite of state apartments was thrown open, and the hundreds of guests made their way up the grand stairway into the lobby, where the portraits of Presidents gazed across banks of Christmas greens and rows of huge vases holding whole trees of holly."

Because of the presence of young adults in the presidential families, Christmas parties for young people enlivened the Administrations of Coolidge, Hoover, FDR, Truman, Johnson, and Ford. The Roosevelt children were always bringing home friends for the holidays. And where there were friends, there were parties.



President and Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt restored the "old-time gaiety" to society in Washington

The first Christmas party of the Herbert Hoovers was nearly a disaster, for a fire nearly burned down the White House. Here is how it happened.

The Christmas of 1929 was frigid in more ways than one. The stock market crash, heralding the Great Depression, was fresh in everyone's mind, as was the certainty of bad times. The weather was frosty. Snow lay on the ground, and ice frosted the windowpanes.

At the White House, though, a festive spirit prevailed. President and Mrs. Herbert Hoover were welcoming the children of the President's staff at a party. Most were young, but a few were in their late teens and early twenties. They congregated around the President's son Allen, home from Harvard for the holidays. A scarlet-coated contingent of the U.S. Marine Band played carols in the East Room. Dinner, refreshments, games, and presents were on the evening agenda.

In the West Wing of the White House, a skeleton staff preserved security. A Secret Service operative, a policeman, and a switchboard operator were the only ones manning the Christmas Eve shift. The President's Oval Office, the press room, and the clerical offices were all quiet. Above the main floor was an attic crammed with papers of every sort.

Shortly after 8 P.M. the switchboard operator, M. M. Rice, saw wisps of smoke near his station. He immediately phoned the Secret Service, the White House police office, and chief usher Irwin (Ike) Hoover, the legendary majordomo to nine Presidents.

A few moments later an office messenger, Charlie Williamson, smelled smoke fumes. He ran directly into Secret Service agent Russell Wood and policeman Richard Trice. The three men knew something was wrong. Tracing the now-thickening smoke, Wood and Trice mounted a stairway to the attic. There they encountered a wall of flames. One of them ran to turn in an alarm. The others sought a fire extinguisher.

But nothing happened when the main lighting switch was pulled. Fire had burned the wires away. It was inside the partitions. The whole place was on fire. Fortunately the White House fire alarm box worked. A team of engines was soon tearing through deserted Washington streets, heading for the big house at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

Meanwhile, back at the State Dining Room, chief usher Hoover notified Larry Richey, the President's personal secretary,



The Franklin Roosevelts welcomed their son home for Christmas with gay holiday decorations

and the President himself. They all rushed to the scene, concerned about the number of valuable public and personal documents that were imperiled.

The President hastily donned a heavy blue overcoat and gray fedora over his dinner jacket and raced to the South Lawn to see the flames. He hurried to save some papers from his office, but was hustled away by worried Secret Service agents. Mr. Hoover then went to the roof of the adjacent conservatory, the long low wing known as the West Terrace, which connects the White House and the Executive Offices. There he lighted a cigar and viewed the proceedings.

The fire threatened to get out of control. Sixteen engines had come through the White House gates. Several of Mr. Hoover's secretaries and his son Allen braved the flames to save some personal files and documents and the chairs that were used for cabinet meetings. At times it appeared as if the flames were subdued, but there were occasional bursts of blaze through the roof, causing the firemen considerable difficulty. Four firemen were overcome by the staggering heat. By 9:24 P.M. five alarms had been sounded.

Enormous amounts of water had to be used to douse the stubborn flames. So, what the flames did not destroy, water did. Fortunately many valuable documents had been removed during a remodeling a few months before.

In the basement, working by kerosene lantern, switchboard operator Rice stayed by his post until, knee deep in icy water, he was ordered to leave. Six firemen were flattened when the ceiling in the President's office crashed down on them. Two were hurt by the falling crystal chandelier, but the remaining four were miraculously unhurt. Outside, the streets and walls and firemen were covered by a sheet of ice.

News of the fire spread rapidly and crowds soon gathered. Secretary of War Patrick Hurley ordered 150 soldiers from Fort McNair (then called the Washington Barracks) to surround the White House and hold back the crowds. Across the Potomac River at Fort Myer, a troop of the 3d Cavalry was standing by in case it was needed. One hundred men of the Metropolitan Police supplemented the Army troops.

President Hoover nervously paced back and forth, puffing on his cigar. He was cheered by the courageous bravado of Honorary Deputy Chief Henry C. Stein, who charged into the President's office to save the President's personal silk flag. Dressed in

boots, waterproof coat, and white helmet, Stein emerged with the flag intact, and great cheers went up from the crowd.

It was soon evident that the President's office was ruined. The officer in charge of D.C. public buildings was then Lieutenant Colonel U. S. Grant III, the grandson of President Grant. Leaving his Christmas Eve dinner, Grant spent most of the night trying to locate a new office for the Chief Executive. Eventually Mr. Hoover used the office of the former Chief of Staff, General John J. Pershing.

The executive offices were unusable and would have to be rebuilt. The President's staff were housed temporarily in the State, War, and Navy Department Buildings across West Executive Avenue.

Mrs. Hoover kept the Christmas Eve party going at full swing. Many of the guests did not even know there was a fire. The President finally wound down and went to bed around midnight.

At 7:27 on Christmas morning, the White House fire was officially declared out, almost twelve hours after it started. The cause of the fire was discovered to be an overheated flue in the open fireplace of a secretary's office. Fifteen firemen had been injured, but the President's House was saved.

At Christmas in 1934, President and Mrs. Roosevelt welcomed their sons, Franklin, Jr., and John, home from school for the holidays, with a dinner dance. The mansion was decked in holiday dress. Four Christmas trees, brilliantly lighted and shining under the white portico facing Pennsylvania Avenue, greeted the three hundred guests as they arrived.

In the East Room, where the dance was held, a Christmas tree stood in the recessed windows, and Christmas greens and holly, interspersed with red poinsettias, banked the four mantels.

Eleanor Roosevelt enjoyed giving dinner dances for the "young set." She liked to invite engaged and young married couples. Generally, Meyer Davis' orchestra would play, and a delightful "supper" was served.

The staff was highly amused by Mrs. Roosevelt's custom of serving raw onions with the scrambled eggs and sausages. "She gets all those romantic young couples and then tries to kill the romance," commented a White House maid.

But she was kind and generous. She waited on the others and ate her plate on the backstairs steps after everyone had been served. She also enjoyed the Virginia Reel with her brother.

Mamie Eisenhower gave a tea party for newspaperwomen, beginning in 1957. Male reporters were excluded! Mamie loved to supervise the decorations of the White House in time for the party. Wrote Bess Furman of the 1957 party, "There were great bouquets of red poinsettias combined with holly in the East Room, hall and foyer; pink poinsettias in the Green Room; frosty white branches in the Blue Room; and white poinsettias in the Red Room where Mrs. Eisenhower received her guests."

Standing in the receiving line with Mrs. Eisenhower were Alice Roosevelt Longworth, Perle Mesta, and Mrs. Merriweather Post.

The Kennedys and the Johnsons expanded the First Family's party-giving. The diplomatic corps had a party of their own. Then the children of the diplomats were invited to a special party.

By 1979, there was a full array of parties. The Carters' Christmas season began on December 5, when one thousand people, mostly members of Congress and their spouses, came to a ball. Peter Duchin and his orchestra played in the East Room. Tables were laden with smoked trout and salmon, crab claws, ham, roast beef, marinated artichokes and mushrooms, cheese ring, fruitcake, a chocolate Yule log, eggnog, champagne and other wines, and a Christmas punch.

On the very next night, the Carters hosted five hundred members of the Washington press corps. Then there were parties for the White House staff, the Secret Service, and the children of diplomats. In 1980, the Carters gave a dinner for the Cabinet and the White House senior staff, in addition to the other parties.

In 1981, Nancy Reagan invited the press for a sneak preview of the White House decorations a day before the general public was admitted. She served coffee and pastries.

All of this party-giving rather bewildered Mrs. Betty Ford. In her autobiography, *The Times of My Life*, she wrote: "The Christmas parties started, and I didn't think they'd ever stop. There was a party at the Hospital for Sick Children, and I went and helped Santa Claus distribute gifts. There was a White House party for the children of the diplomatic corps, and after that, a practically identical party for the children of the cooks, maids, and anybody else who worked in the White House. There were parties for kids, and parties for grownups. We gave a Christmas party for the members of the White House press. . . .

"We gave an honest-to-goodness ball that season too: the first

Annual Christmas Ball in years for the Cabinet and members of Congress. It had occurred to me that the White House looked so beautiful during the holidays that it would be an ideal time to entertain the Congress with a great black-tie gathering. And it was in the Blue Room, Jerry pointed to the magnificent tree that stretched clear to the ceiling and told the thousand guests—from the Hill, the Cabinet, the senior White House staff—that he and the Christmas tree, also from Michigan, had a lot in common. 'A few months ago, neither one of us expected to be in the White House.' "

6 Gifts

Christmas would hardly be Christmas without the exchange of gifts. Records of the early Presidents are quite sketchy as far as Christmas gifts are concerned. We do know that Andrew Jackson loved to lavish saddles, hobbyhorses, and wax dolls on his grandnieces and grandnephews. Abraham Lincoln loved to do his own Christmas shopping, as did William Howard Taft and Woodrow Wilson.

Every Christmas Eve while he was President, Lincoln would walk slowly along New York Avenue until he reached the vicinity of Twelfth Street. There he would enter a quaint little toy shop presided over by a Crimean War veteran. Toy soldiers were the object of his quest, for Tad, his beloved little boy, adored them and always could use "just a few more" for their sham battles.

Passersby could see the tall, gaunt President, his shawl closely drawn about him, listening to the old Crimean warrior demonstrating the great battles of that campaign with toy soldiers.

On Christmas Eve in 1909, President Taft left the White House on foot to shop on Pennsylvania Avenue and F Street, returning long after dark, laden down with bundles. The President could be heard chuckling, because his aide, Captain Archie Butt, was also carrying an enormous number of gifts.

Wilson usually tried to do his shopping early. One year he was seen in the shops on December 1. In 1916, after his reelection, Wilson and his wife, Edith, went shopping together. An amusing incident is told by Mrs. Wilson: "My husband and I squeezed in one little Christmas shopping tour together. At Becker's leather store a clerk was so shy that he could hardly articulate. Showing the President a bag with a removable watch he said: 'You could take it out and make a wist wrotch out of it.' He tried the sentence

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U.S. News & World Report

September 28, 1987

SECTION: U.S. NEWS; Pg. 37

LENGTH: 1179 words

HEADLINE: Three former First Ladies recall the highs and lows of their White House years; Reflections on life in a fishbowl

BYLINE: by Muriel Dobbin

BODY:

* They belong to one of the world's most exclusive women's clubs, an organization whose five living members have little else in common except that they are or were married to men who happened to be Presidents of the United States. As former First Ladies of America, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, Lady Bird Johnson, Pat Nixon, Betty Ford and Rosalynn Carter have shared the pomp and circumstances that come with living in the White House and the difficult transition that comes with leaving it, especially if the departure was involuntary.

"Of course I was bitter at the time," recalls Betty Ford, "but once I got over being upset at losing the election, I was happy about leaving public life." As outspoken and candid as any First Lady has ever been about her marriage, her sex life with the President and her troubled days in the Executive Mansion, Mrs. Ford overcame not only her husband's narrow defeat in the 1976 election, but a bout with cancer and drugs as well. Today, she alternates between homes in Colorado and Palm Springs, where she devotes several days each week to working with patients at the world-famous center for drug and alcoholism rehabilitation that bears her name.

As with the other members of her elite club, Betty Ford is never completely out of the public eye. "I suspect that it was sheer wishful thinking to imagine that we would ever really leave public life," says the 69-year-old Mrs. Ford as she sits in a cheerful room in her summer home in Beaver Creek, with a view of the nearby Rockies. "We are still political and still very public." Last week, for example, former President Gerald Ford, who remains on call as one of the Republicans' most energetic campaigners, flew to Washington to introduce Supreme Court nominee Robert Bork to the Senate Judiciary Committee. Mrs. Ford herself, who established a new level for First Lady frankness in her first book, which detailed her pill-and-alcohol addiction, recently has completed a second book in which she discusses why she eventually was so happy to leave partisan politics: "I had eaten enough creamed chicken," she says, "to have earned a presidential pardon."

Intrusive symbols

Like all of the other former First Ladies except Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, Betty Ford retains that most obvious and sometimes intrusive symbol of life in the White House, Secret Service protection. John Kennedy's widow, who works for Doubleday, a New York publishing house, gave up her right to government bodyguards after she was married to

Aristotle Onassis. And although she is frequently on the covers of supermarket checkout-counter weeklies, and on many lists of America's best-dressed women, "Jackie," now 58, strenuously guards her privacy and refuses all requests for interviews. Pat Nixon, 75, who has had two debilitating strokes, is necessarily reclusive at the home she shares in Saddle River, N.J., with the former President.

Career stoppers?

In the view of Rosalynn Carter, 60, it is the omnipresence of the Secret Service and the increasing necessity for security protection that ultimately may preclude even the most liberated of future First Ladies from pursuing a career while she and her husband are in residence at the White House. "The role of the First Lady is changing as women are changing," explains Mrs. Carter. "And when you get to the White House, you will see so many things to do from that vantage point. But a full-time job could be a problem for a First Lady, partly because of the official duties she has and also because of the security."

Of all the former First Ladies, Mrs. Carter remains most in the headlines. She has written two autobiographical books about growing up in a small Southern town and about the difficult transitions she experienced both going into and leaving the White House. Despite the entreaties of many Georgia Democrats, Mrs. Carter has considered but rejected running for public office on her own. Instead, she spends much of her time in social work and research projects at the Carter Presidential Center in Atlanta. Clearly, even after almost seven years, she has not yet completely gotten over either her husband's electoral defeat or what she believes was the unfair way he was treated by the media. "The press," she asserts, "was misinformed about Jimmy Carter."

Lady Bird Johnson, 74, whom the White House press corps probably admired more than any other recent First Lady, also recalls "some battered days" during her husband's six years as President. Her memories of that convulsive era include the specter of anti-Vietnam demonstrators virtually at the White House gates howling: "Hey, hey, LBJ, how many kids did you kill today?" Little wonder that when LBJ finally decided not to seek re-election, the First Lady's palpable sigh of relief could be heard all the back to the Johnson ranch in the Texas hills.

Friend and ally

Sitting in a rocker and sipping spiced tea on the porch of that ranch, Mrs. Johnson recently recalled her own philosophy as a political wife of more than three decades. "The basic responsibility of the First Lady," she said, waving to a busload of tourists driving by, "is to make the White House a home for the President. That office carries a heavy burden, and the President's wife has to be his best friend, his ally and his interpreter of what is going on outside, the things his staff doesn't tell him."

Yet for all her warm personal relations with the Washington press corps, Mrs. Johnson, who spends considerable time as the head of the National Wildflower Research Center, which she founded five years ago, still shares Rosalynn Carter's wariness of the media. "The press," says Mrs. Johnson with an uncharacteristic touch of bitterness, "is there to portray, to understand -- not to set themselves up as judges, as moral arbiters, hunting down their prey, then pouncing for the throat." Mrs. Johnson's concern is prompted by more than her musings on history. She may yet become the first First Lady to mother another First Lady. Daughter

Lynda Bird is, of course, married to former Virginia Governor Charles Robb, often mentioned as a future possible Democratic nominee for the White House. "I don't have any idea whether he'll run, but I worry that the press might hurt her, and that Lynda would then lash out," Mrs. Johnson explains.

Rosalynn Carter, who is one of the younger former First Ladies, also thinks about a possible public career for her daughter -- but as a politician, not as the wife of a politician. Amy Carter, she reminded, was already a college activist and "I wouldn't be surprised if she eventually went into politics herself. Amy feels strongly enough about issues that she's willing to subject herself to all kinds of things to get her point across. And she's been used to intrusion all her life." Would she like her 20-year-old daughter to run for President? "Someday," Mrs. Carter said with a diplomatic smile, "the President will be a woman and then we'll be discussing the role of her husband."

GRAPHIC: Picture 1, 1974-77, Betty Ford: Happy to leave public life, ERNIE LEYBA -- PHOTOSTAFF FOR USN&WR; Picture 2, 1963-69, Lady Bird Johnson: Making the White House a home, DAVID KENNEDY FOR USN&WR; Picture 3, 1977-81, Rosalynn Carter: Still in the public eye, SHELLY KATZ FOR USN&WR

recently during the resignation of former White House Chief of Staff Donald Regan.

"Her interest lay in having effective people serve her husband," Rosebush says.

She was almost "crucified" by the news media as power hungry after the Regan episode. But, says her former aide, her ambition resulted from a "built-in defense mechanism that surfaced when her husband was threatened."

Other First Ladies have similarly played the role of "political partner." Abigail Adams was so vocal in her opinions she was dubbed "Mrs. President" and "Her Majesty." Sarah Polk and Mary Todd Lincoln also engaged in direct lobbying. And Eleanor Roosevelt became a representative of the President with her far-flung activities. As for Rosalynn Carter, she was a "thoroughly political First Lady who was treated as an equal political partner by the President."

But there are hazards in stepping out front politically. Rosebush observes that the American people do not want a surrogate president whom they did not elect. Any First Lady has to be careful about exercising political power, the author says, and to date no First Lady has abused her influence.

As the First Lady's responsibilities have grown, so has her staff. Edith Roosevelt was the first to acquire a permanent nondomestic staff person to help with personal mail. The job of press secretary came into being with Jacqueline Kennedy, when television began making greater demands, and a "projects manager" was added when Lady Bird Johnson's beautification project got under way.

Over the past few administrations the First Lady's nondomestic staff has leveled off at about 20 people.

So demanding and complex has the job of First Lady become that Rosebush suggests Congress may one day provide her with some financial compensation, just as ambassadors' wives now receive limited pay. "It may be time to acknowledge the fact that most official jobs require hard-working spouses," he writes.

If the wives of today's presidential hopefuls wonder just how hard, they might ponder this capsule description from "First Lady, Public Wife":

"Any First Lady must be, according to public dictates, attentive and interested in anyone - farmers, factory workers, and kings - but not too familiar. She must be well informed about her husband's political agendas, regardless of her interest in them. She is expected to reflect the spirit of America - the whole country - without regard to her own regional background. She must treat the press without contempt, even though they can

treat her with it. Be well dressed, not overdressed. Be prepared, not rehearsed. Be a devoted wife, but also a woman of independence. Express opinions frankly, but never be flippant. Care for the house, but never appear to be absorbed in it. Show emotion, but never appear contrived.''

HEADLINE: Ecuador's Feminist First Lady

BYLINE: By Donnie Radcliffe

With change becoming the rule rather than the exception south of the border, why not a feminist first lady for South America's newest democratically elected president?

Why not, indeed, many of the 600 guests asked themselves last night at the Ecuadorian Embassy where president-elect Jaime Roldos, who takes office on Aug. 10, shared the spotlight with his wife, Martha.

Some guests were still talking about how earlier in the day at a press conference, Roldos had introduced his wife when a reporter asked about the make-up of his cabinet. Then Senora Roldos announced that for the first time in Ecuador's history, a woman will serve in the cabinet.

Later, when Roldos was asked again about the identity of his cabinet, the president-elect replied: "To know my cabinet you should ask my wife."

Last night, her response to that remark was that "Jaime is a very intelligent man and he, as president, will be the one who chooses. But the woman will possess the same traits of the other cabinet ministers - honesty, wisdom and capability."

"She's not only his wife, but his adviser and partner in politics," said Rocio Sevilla-Borja, Ecuador's charge d'affaires who, with his wife, hosted last night's reception.

While Roldos was closeted in a private office on a long-distance call to his vice president-elect in Ecuador, his wife discussed her role with reporters.

Had Rosalynn Carter been a role model?

"I consider the role Mrs. Carter is doing a role any woman would be proud of," she replied. "A wife shares joy and sadness, but a wife also collaborates with her husband in an effort to integrate his problems and to solve his problems, together. It is not a superficial role."

Founder of an Ecuadorian woman's organization which she thinks became a major factor in her husband's 68 percent popular vote, Senora Roldos said Ecuadorians were surprised at the active role she played as a campaign adviser.

"But now people welcome it and understand."

Sen. Edward Zorinsky (D-Neb.), chairman of the subcommittee on affairs of the western hemisphere, said he did not know if Senora Roldos would accompany her husband to a breakfast meeting Senate colleagues are giving this morning.

"Wives don't ordinarily attend, but she is certainly welcome."

Surprisingly, there was little sustained talk about the fall of the Somoza government. Undersecretary of State David D. Newsom, ranking State Department official, kept his own counsel, disappearing into the crowd of guests from Latin American and OAS embassies, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the Ecuadorian community.

Miami publisher Francisco Aguirre said whoever the next Nicaraguan ambassador is, "He'll be a simple guy - and skinny."

Embassy rooms had been newly redecorated for the occasion and were bare of furnishings. Social Secretary Cary Casares quickly corrected that yesterday. She not only brought her own art collection from home, but borrowed those of her friends.



TRADING PLACES

Left to right: Pat Nixon, Mamie Eisenhower, Lady Bird Johnson, and Jacqueline Kennedy. While the Ladies watched their husbands go through the formal transition on Capitol Hill, a frenzy of packing and unpacking went on back at the White House.

First Ladies on Parade

CA.

PAT NIXON

The departing Second Lady thought she was leaving politics for good.

MAMIE EISENHOWER

Finally, she could take her husband home to Gettysburg.

JACQUELINE KENNEDY

When a friend told Jackie she'd have to make concessions in her new role, she said, "I will. I'll wear hats."

LADY BIRD JOHNSON

Lady Bird and Lyndon had been out late the night before, partying at old Joe Kennedy's post-gala bash.



Kennedy's inauguration was also a historic gathering of America's most exclusive sorority. Eight once and future First Ladies descended on snowbound Washington: Edith Wilson, Eleanor Roosevelt, Bess Truman, Mamie Eisenhower, Jacqueline Kennedy, Lady Bird Johnson, Pat Nixon, and Betty Ford. On the eve of this month's inauguration, CARL SFERRAZZA ANTHONY reconstructs this unique (and not entirely harmonic) convergence



BESS TRUMAN

Though "Give 'em Hell" Harry was raring to go, Bess wouldn't allow her husband to brave the snow to attend the inaugural parties.



"I was so proud of Jack.... But I could scarcely embrace him in front of all those people."



**PUBLIC FIGURES,
PRIVATE MOMENTS**

The public image was flawless and elegant as the Kennedys left the White House to attend the inaugural balls (*opposite page*). Both Jack and Jackie were uncomfortable displaying affection publicly, but a photographer caught a guarded moment of intimacy (*above*) after the swearing-in ceremony.

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OLD GUARD

Edith Wilson,
opposite page, top,
brought her
flasks of bourbon
to the inauguration to
ward off the cold.
Eleanor Roosevelt,
opposite page, bottom,
refused to follow the
carefully laid plans of the
Inaugural Committee.
Bess Truman, with Harry,
below, had to drag her
husband away from
old Senate pals and into
his seat of honor.

Bess was forlorn. "Every time I go to Washington,
it is just a bit harder to have to leave."

PAUL SCHUTZER

On the morning of Wednesday, January 18, 1961, an elderly, bespectacled gray-haired couple bustled into the lobby of the Mayflower Hotel on Connecticut Avenue. They walked up to the front desk, registered, and went to their room. Just in from Union Station, Bess Truman and her husband, Harry, had taken the train all the way from Missouri for the inauguration.



Seven blocks north, an even older lady was up early, as usual. This was the woman who, they still whispered, had run the country nearly a half-century before, while her husband, Woodrow, lay immobile in the Lincoln bed. Edith Wilson had already decided on the outfits she would wear to the inaugural events.

Down Connecticut Avenue, at the White House, chief usher J. B. West helped the First Lady in the rush of last-minute packing. The woman who had put pink on the map, the walls, the rugs, the beds, and the curtains was getting ready to leave. She had had one concern for six years: Mamie Eisenhower wanted to leave the White House with her husband alive.

What should he do with the extra stack of publicity photographs of her in the "Mamie Pink" inaugural gown? asked West. "Send 'em to Gettysburg," she told him. What should he do with the Mamie Pink pens someone had sent her? "Send 'em to Gettysburg." Mr. West had his hands full. During their transition meeting, Mrs. Kennedy's social secretary, Tish Baldrige, had asked Mrs. Eisenhower's social secretary, Mary Jane McCaffree, whether West could "smuggle" in some of the Kennedy possessions before the inauguration, "without the E's knowing." It broke all the rules, but he acquiesced. If the First Lady had found out, the chief usher later chuckled, she'd have been "fit to be tied."

Northwest of the presidential man-

sion, in the Wesley Heights section of town, a lady from Texas and a lady from California were also getting ready. Neither would be leaving her Washington home after the inauguration, at least not immediately, but their lives would change dramatically. Lady Bird Johnson was coming in as Second Lady. Pat Nixon was going out.

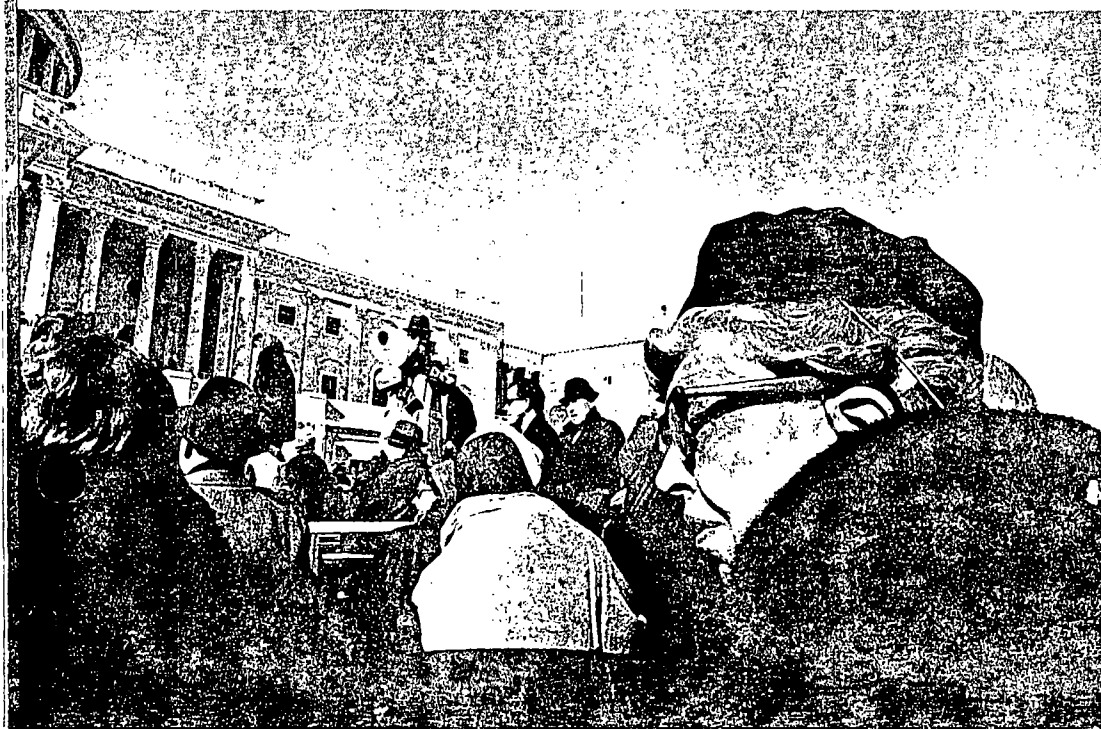
Across the Potomac, in Alexandria, Virginia, a congressional wife had her hands full. She was managing an energetic household of preadolescent children, and getting ready for out-of-town guests from New York. But as a member of the loyal opposition, Betty Ford would also attend the swearing-in ceremony.

Finally, a twin-engine Convair had arrived from Palm Beach and was landing at a military airport. The door opened. A dark-haired woman in a slim white-and-black plaid suit, high-heeled alligator shoes, and a red beret walked out into the white flash of the cameras.

Jacqueline Kennedy smiled, waved briefly, stepped into a car, and was whisked off to her Georgetown house.

In the two days before the inauguration, the public would see Mrs. Kennedy for only about an hour and a half—which merely heightened the sense of mystery that had grown up around her. She remained in Georgetown, calm amid the frantic activity, keeping mostly to her bedroom on the second floor. Belowstairs, the family possessions were being packed. There were fittings for the white inaugural gown she had helped design, and Kenneth of New York was in town to do her famous bouffant.

In the previous weeks, headlines about Mrs. Kennedy's clothes and hair had rivaled the number of headlines about the "New Frontier" Cabinet and its programs. Privately, Jacqueline mused, "What difference could it make to *anyone* whether I wore *two* or *three* strings of pearls?" And Lady Bird Johnson, when asked about the bouffant question, had a memorable response: "I would hope that what is on the inside is more important than what is on the outside!" Jacqueline also hoped that public attention would shift to more serious matters when





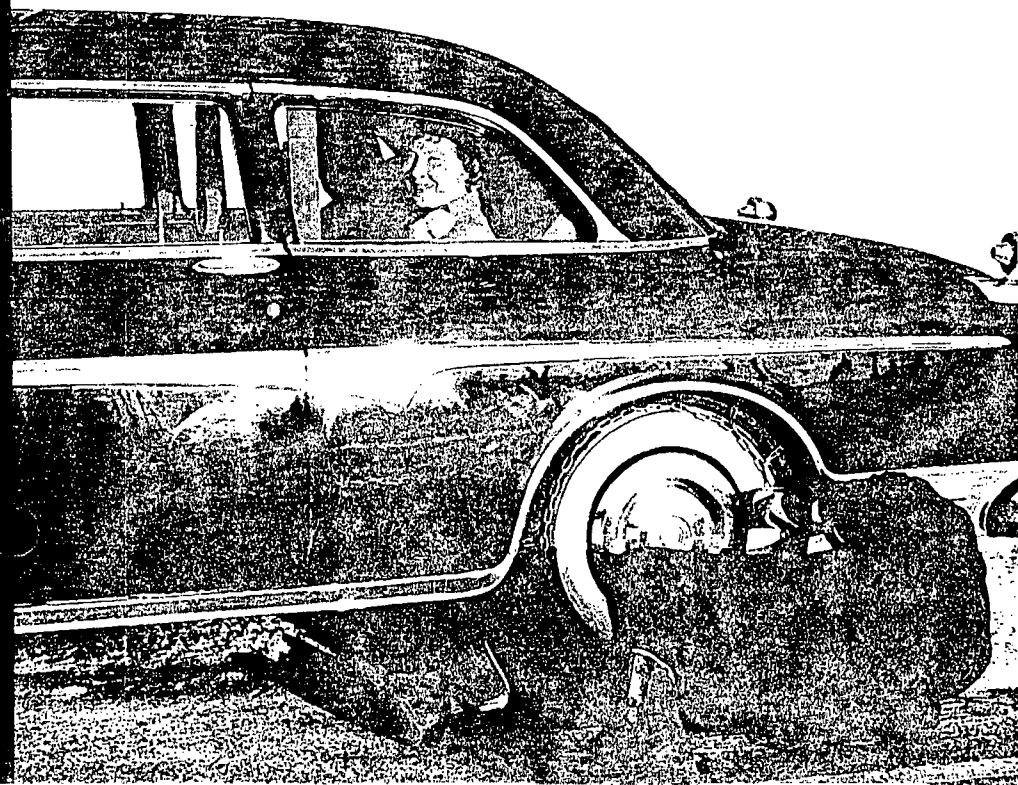
she unveiled her plans for a historic restoration of the White House.

One thing was certain: Mrs. Kennedy's children were her life. She had decided that three-year-old Caroline and baby John should stay in Palm Beach until February, determined that none of this goldfish-bowl life affect them in these impressionable years. "I was reading Carlyle, and he said you should do the duty that lies nearest you," she told a reporter. "And the thing that lies nearest me is my children." Of all the First Ladies to gather at the inaugural, the one Jacqueline hoped to emulate, oddly enough, was Bess Truman. She admired her because Bess had raised Margaret in the glare of the press and public and still managed to keep her child from being spoiled.

"I shudder to think of Jackie Kennedy in the White House," Mamie told a friend.

COMING AND GOING

Pat Nixon and Lady Bird Johnson on their way to the inauguration, *above*. The Eisenhowers, *below*, trying to make their getaway to Gettysburg.



That Wednesday night Margaret Truman Daniel would join her parents at a Georgetown party. The guests included Robert Frost, whom Jack Kennedy had asked to read one of his poems at the swearing-in ceremony, Arthur Schlesinger Jr., and Jayne Wrightsman, the Palm Beach heiress who shared Mrs. Kennedy's passion for American antiques. At the last minute, Jack Kennedy made a surprise appearance—but without the elusive Jackie.

Jacqueline Kennedy was not the only First Lady with a sense of the dramatic. The following morning, Thursday the nineteenth, National Airport was closed by a heavy snow. David and Edna Gurewitsch accompanied an old woman with thick spectacles and a rapid stride through the terminal. Theirs had been the last plane allowed to land.

There were no photographers, but four naval escorts with heavy wool blankets under their arms were waiting to take the Gurewitsches and their friend into town. The old woman, irritable over all this fuss, turned to the naval aides. "Follow me," she told them, and briskly walked through the crowded airport toward the exit doors, explaining kindly that she didn't need the escort or car. She then returned to her friends, without the navy escort—but with the wool blankets.

"Here," she said as she handed them to David and Edna, "you'll need these. You don't know how cold it is."

Eleanor Roosevelt had arrived.

And the snow kept falling.

That evening, Edith Wilson was to join Mrs. Kennedy and Mrs. Johnson for the Inaugural Concert at Constitution Hall. Afterward, the Kennedys and Johnsons were expected at the Armory with the Trumans for a gala organized by Frank Sinatra and Peter Lawford. Along with the best of Hollywood and Las Vegas, a truly historic moment had been scheduled: Eleanor Roosevelt was to join Fredric March in reading the words of Lincoln.

Mrs. Wilson was not about to let the storm keep her from her moment in the limelight. Furthermore, she was hoping to catch a glimpse of Jackie. This oldest of the living First Ladies was an unabashed fan of the woman about to become the third-youngest First Lady in America's (Continued on page 118)

First Ladies

(Continued from page 100) history. After the election, Mrs. Wilson had sent a telegram to her young successor offering "warmest congratulations and personal gratitude for your great victory." In response, Jacqueline had made a personal call to pay homage to this queen mother of First Ladies; Edith described Jackie as "poised and mature as well as beautiful."

So, after dinner, Edith Wilson directed her driver to begin the increasingly treacherous course down to Constitution Hall. It took her two hours to get there. By the time she arrived, the Kennedys had left. At intermission, they had started across town to attend the gala at the Armory.

All along the way, drivers were abandoning their cars to walk home. They waved at the limousine, and the president-elect told artist Bill Walton, who was accompanying the Kennedys, to "turn on the lights so they can see Jackie." The gala began as soon as Jacqueline, Lady Bird, and their husbands arrived, after a delay of almost two hours.

Bess Truman had flatly refused to brave the snow, and wouldn't allow Harry to go either. Eleanor Roosevelt, who was staying with her son Franklin junior, attended a reception given by Arthur and Mathilde Krim and Robert Benjamin, leaders of the New York Citizens Committee for Kennedy, before heading out to give her gala performance. A limousine was scheduled to pick her up and take her to the Armory. The driver arrived late, explaining that the car was stuck in the snow and he had to go out and get snow tires. He left, and Eleanor told Edna, "He will not come back. Not in this weather."

Waiting for something to happen had never been Eleanor Roosevelt's style. When someone offered her a ride, she took it. As she later wrote to her old friend Lorena "Hick" Hickok, "The snow... really played havoc with Washington. Traffic was snarled, cars ran out of gas or their batteries gave out, & they were abandoned in midstreet adding to the chaos. I tried to get to the gala performance but sat 4 hrs. in a traffic snarl & when a break came I went home!" She did not get back until three A.M. The driver had returned.

Betty Ford and her husband had also planned to attend the gala. Ford left his office for their house in Alexandria at three P.M.; he was to collect his wife, then they would pick up some friends, Democrats from New York, at the Shoreham Hotel. But the snow was so bad

that he did not get home until eleven, and he and Betty never made it into Washington at all.

The woman least likely to be celebrating that evening was in a very upbeat mood. Pat Nixon had never been bitter in her disappointment; this night she seemed positively jovial. A friend recalled that she joked "about what the next day would be like, what an outrageous outfit she was going to wear, what she would say to [Minority Leader Everett] Dirksen and Johnson, imitating their individual drawls..." To celebrate, Mrs. Nixon broke out a bottle of wine given to her by Douglas Dillon, Ike's undersecretary of state, who jumped party fences to become Kennedy's Treasury secretary. She was thrilled to be leaving politics forever.

The next morning, Inauguration Day, Edith Wilson awoke at dawn. She didn't want to once again miss seeing Jackie. Though the president-elect had thoughtfully provided her with a police escort, she decided to start for the Capitol well ahead of time. Behind screeching motorcycles, the grande dame in the purple suit made her way through the snow-covered town, down Connecticut Avenue and onto Pennsylvania Avenue.

Lady Bird and Lyndon Johnson were up at nine A.M., later than usual, having attended old Joe Kennedy's post-gala party the night before. They breakfasted in their bedroom, and then Mrs. Johnson got dressed in her Ben Zuckerman parrot-green silk-and-wool suit, with matching veiled hat. Their limousine arrived just before eleven and whisked them down to the White House. Pat and Dick Nixon left their daughters at home. Tricia sadly writing of "D Day" in her diary that "Daddy should have been [inaugurated]." Mrs. Nixon was wearing a sapphire-blue suit and petal hat as she and Dick were driven to the White House for what she thought would be the last time.

In Georgetown, Jacqueline was getting ready for her great day. She decided against wearing fur, because "women huddling on the bleachers always looked like rows of furbearing animals." The Kennedys' official escort limousine arrived at 10:40. They departed for the White House.

At 11:04, Jack and Jacqueline arrived at the mansion. They were escorted into the Red Room. Jacqueline shook hands with Mamie, and slipped quietly onto a sofa next to Pat. At her last reception as First Lady, Mamie was extremely convivial, her usual bubbly self. Excited by the pomp, regardless of the reason for it, she

made sure that everyone had enough coffee and pastries. Then the party prepared for the official procession down Pennsylvania Avenue. Putting on her mink, Mrs. Eisenhower—sometimes a tough boss, but always a loving one—gave her chief usher a wink and a smile.

Out on the windswept portico, Ike put on the formal top hat. Then he and Jack stepped into the first car, their wives into the second. Mamie joked, "Doesn't Ike look like Paddy the Irishman in his top hat?" There was no response from Jacqueline. Senator Styles Bridges of the Inaugural Committee, who rode with the Ladies, told reporter Molly Thayer that on their ride to the Capitol "Mrs. Kennedy said very little. Mrs. Eisenhower chatted on effortlessly."

Driving in from suburban Virginia were the young and self-assured "housewife" Betty and her husband, Congressman Gerald R. Ford. "We had to fight the snow," she recalled. "Once we got into Washington, though, most streets were cleared."

A temporary white structure had been built on the East Front of the Capitol, with painted wood pillars, assigned seating, space heaters, and individual U.S. Navy blankets. It would seat the top military brass, the entire foreign diplomatic corps, the chief justice and his Supreme Court, and the new Cabinet. And, of course, the Ladies. Each group would be escorted out to its special section from a holding area in the Capitol.

The deep-blue sky was clear, the winds terrific, the temperature a chilling twenty degrees. At 11:43, Mamie and Jacqueline, arriving from the White House, took the elevator from the ground to the principal floor of the Capitol. As one reporter described the scene, Mamie, "in almost her last act as the Nation's hostess, gestured toward the suite of Minority Leader Dirksen," who had turned his offices over for the use of the Ladies. By now the two women were chatting amiably. They walked slowly, "obviously impressed with the dignity of the occasion." Lady Bird and Pat joined them.

Meanwhile, Bess and Harry arrived, Mrs. Truman "with a practical plaid, wool blanket folded over her arm." She had to punch Harry "three times before he left the senatorial huddle and followed her to his seat of honor."

One former First Lady, however, made good on a promise that some had viewed as a threat. Though Eleanor Roosevelt had been assigned a seat of prominence on the platform—in the third row, next to Edith Wilson and two seats behind Lady Bird—

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she refused to sit there. One of the earliest special guests to arrive for the swearing-in. Mrs. Roosevelt told reporters that she had relinquished her seat with the other First Ladies because "she couldn't hear sitting behind the speaker."

In fact, Eleanor's decision was motivated at least in part by her strong dislike of President-elect Kennedy's father, as well as a conviction that Adlai Stevenson should have been named as the new secretary of state. Furthermore, as one friend put it, "she wasn't interested in what was past. To be a has-been First Lady was of no interest to her. She loved being free."

Her decision caused not a little bit of consternation. The Inaugural Committee planners had counted on a unified gathering, and they were furious. J. B. West remembered that even Mrs. Eisenhower had been upset when she heard that morning that the seating chart for the inaugural stand had been changed. West thought she actually seemed hurt by Eleanor's decision. "Now, why not put differences aside for one day?" she asked him rhetorically. "Why not? It's protocol. You can't go against protocol. Not on a day like that. I'm going. Pat Nixon is going. Why can't she? She's a Democrat. It's just not right." But with all her own last-minute worries, Mrs. Eisenhower finally shrugged her shoulders. "Well, I guess it's not my problem."

To the last, Mamie was a diplomat. Never once did her daughter-in-law, Barbara, who was with her throughout the entire inauguration, hear Mamie say anything about Eleanor's decision. Mrs. Eisenhower had evidently cooled down, perhaps from the embarrassment of having the *New York Daily News* print her remark to a friend that "I shudder to think of Jackie Kennedy in the White House."

Because Mrs. Roosevelt was not on the platform, many thought she wasn't there. A few photographers managed to catch up with her in the diplomatic section, though, as she wrapped herself tightly in a blanket. She told reporters that the freezing day was "lovely," compared with her past inaugurations—Uncle Ted's in 1905, Wilson's in 1913, and Franklin's four. At least the sun was out. "The second one of my husband's," she reminisced, "when it rained and we rode in an open car, was worse. It wasn't so uncomfortable, but we were soaked. Franklin said if the people could stand in it, we could sit in it. I had a hat on and I was afraid the dye would run and color my hair. That was my chief concern."

The small flurry of photographers and curious onlookers around the legendary Mrs. Roosevelt immediately caught the

attention of one of the women on the stand who had a sixth sense about the press and "events." She was Eleanor's cousin Alice Roosevelt Longworth, barely recognizable without her cartwheel hat. From afar, Alice recalled, she spotted Eleanor and waved. "I think she recognized me." It was the last time the cousins would ever see each other.

Eleanor and Alice now had one thing in common. The Kennedys. Before the Nixons left Washington, they visited Alice to say good-bye. Richard Nixon remembers Alice telling Pat "she hoped that after we got to California we would not think that she was no longer a friend because she would be attending events at the White House. She put it very bluntly that she simply couldn't bear being out of the swing of things, and that while she had supported me and opposed Kennedy, she would welcome their invitations."

During the ceremony, Alice also noticed the queen mother, Edith Wilson, two rows in front of her, and remarked that her old nemesis of nearly a half-century before looked like "a tipsy Margaret Dumont." Edith may indeed have been tipsy. To ward off the cold, the eighty-eight-year-old former First Lady had brought along her reliable bourbon flasks, hidden deep within her pockets for convenient sips.

One of the few others who recognized Edith was Harry Truman. He squeezed through to her seat and planted a big kiss on her face. Photographers caught that. They also caught a less-than-pleased Bess, whose disapproving stare from behind her glasses made it clear that she didn't appreciate being photographed as she drank coffee from an enormous cup that obscured half of her face.

Some distance from the other Ladies, in the congressional section, sat Betty Ford, in a winter-white cloth coat. Mrs. Ford did not even know that Eleanor Roosevelt, a woman she had long admired, was there. Learning later of her heroine's presence, Betty said wistfully that she "really would have loved to meet her." Still, Mrs. Ford remembers, it was "pretty impressive to be there and take part in history."

Bess, Edith, Eleanor, and Betty were already snug in their seats when the four other Ladies prepared themselves to face the television cameras. Mrs. Nixon remembered that in the holding room, where they "relaxed," "Mrs. Kennedy spent most of her time in the anteroom getting ready." There was a television set in the room, and Lady Bird joined Mamie

and Pat as they watched the V.I.P.'s file in to their seats.

The Marine Band struck up a solemn march as the ceremony began. The participants made their way onto the platform and down the narrow, carpeted stairs to their seats. Of the Ladies, Pat and Mamie were the first to walk out. Mrs. Eisenhower had left her trademark pink at home, and was dressed in a bright, fire-engine-red suit, with matching hat, shoes, and gloves, unquenched by a thick mink. They took their seats in the front row, and waited, legs warmed by heaters, faces warmed only by the bright sun, as subzero winds whipped around the gleaming marble building.

The Johnsons and Mr. Nixon followed next. Dick was animated, smiling, shaking hands. Someone waving a ten-gallon hat shouted, "All the way with L.B.J.," and Lyndon grinned, but Lady Bird shook her head reprovingly. Now everyone waited for Jackie and Jack.

Before Jacqueline went out, to be followed immediately by President Eisenhower and the president-elect, Jack made a request to his military aide. "Could you arrange it so that Mrs. Kennedy and I could have a private word?" A room was found and the couple spent some moments together. Then Jacqueline Kennedy descended the stairs onto the platform, and into the public eye.

In a simple beige coat with a narrow sable collar, a sable muff, and white gloves, the soon-to-be First Lady stood out like a pearl among the dark suits and brown furs. But it was her beige pillbox hat which sent fashion editors and milliners into raptures.

Of all the Kennedy women, only Jackie and her mother-in-law wore hats that day. The young Mrs. Kennedy had rarely worn a hat during the 1950s. The hat, perched on a frozen coiffure, was a conventional symbol for Washington political wives; indeed, Mamie Eisenhower had worn some which, by Washington standards, reached Hedda Hopper proportions, sprouting feathers, flowers, and fruit. In the Washington of the late fifties and early sixties, the hat was a feminine symbol of mature political power, something like a crown. When a friend told Jackie that she would have to make concessions to the First Lady role, she responded, "I will. I'll wear hats."

Still, Jackie would always make her own fashion statement, and that day there was something about her hat that set her apart from all the other ladies: the over-size pillbox was sitting on the back of an auburn mane that had been teased and

First Ladies

souffléed by Kenneth into a bouffant beyond anyone's imagination. Across America, women scrutinized Jackie's appearance, and as one reporter noted, "Everyone agreed that Jacqueline Kennedy's career as a major fashion influence was beginning impressively."

There and then, the "Jackie Look" was born.

Ike and Jack made their way to the front of the platform, and the ceremony began. First, Lyndon took his oath. Then Jack, the youngest man ever elected to the office, repeated the Presidential Oath.

Throughout John F. Kennedy's inaugural address, one reporter watched Jacqueline's "luminous eyes," which "never left her husband's face." She also noted how "warmly" Mamie applauded the new president. As Marian Anderson sang the national anthem, Mrs. Eisenhower "blinked her eyes as if suppressing tears."

Seconds after taking the oath, the new president had looked back to meet his wife's eyes. *The New York Times* reported that she "gave him a 'you-did-all-right' smile." But Jack did not turn to kiss her before the millions watching, as Ike had done with Mamie.

Although young and attractive, the Kennedys were to maintain one of the most private relationships in the presidency. Jacqueline was disquieted by the idea of strangers dissecting every one of her little interactions with Jack. And he, though comfortable before cameras and crowds, considered it improper to kiss or hold hands in public. To have done so at the inauguration would have been staged, and have come across as such. What the public didn't see, of course, were the hidden moments—the couple's brief tête-à-tête before the ceremony, and another that took place as the new president and First Lady stole a moment behind the walls, in the hallway of the Capitol's labyrinth, on their way to the postinaugural luncheon.

"I was so proud of Jack," Mrs. Kennedy recalled. "There was so much I wanted to say! But I could scarcely embrace him in front of all those people. So I remember I just put my hand on his cheek and said, 'Jack, you were so wonderful!' And he was smiling in the most touching and most vulnerable way."

Meanwhile, back at the White House, pandemonium was breaking out. In the East Wing, Mrs. Eisenhower's staff was racing about to gather everything up

because the cleaning crew—armed with mops, brooms, trash cans, dusters—was advancing down the hall to get the offices ready for Jacqueline Kennedy's staff. While social secretaries Mary Jane McCaffree and Tish Baldrige dealt with the transition for the public lady, J. B. West oversaw the changes for the private lady. Mamie's electric organ and wicker bridge table were helicoptered away forever to Gettysburg. Jackie's children's toys and furniture came out of their clandestine storage. The nitty-gritty details of the transition had to be taken care of before the Kennedys returned from lunch.

In the cold air on Capitol Hill, another small change had occurred. Eleanor Roosevelt was thawing out.

As she wrote her friend Hick, "Inauguration Day itself was cold & beautiful & the streets were clear & the ceremonies impressive. I thought the speech magnificent, didn't you? I have reread it twice." One of her companions, Joseph Lash, recalled that while the new president shouted his address into the air of an open blue sky Eleanor "looked at her friends with pleasure in her eyes as she heard the sound of youth and fearlessness again filling the land."

Others were impressed as well. Betty Ford "felt privileged to be a small cog in the wheel that day." Robert Frost's poem "had made a big impression," and she thought it interesting "in all that cold and snow that Kennedy went without his topcoat." Far from Washington, in the small town of Plains, the wife of a civic-minded young Georgian, Rosalynn Carter, watched it all on TV. The television was not on in the sunny California home of Nancy Reagan; Mrs. Reagan later said that she "did not watch the Kennedy inaugural," but she was nonetheless aware of—and would copy—the Jackie Look.

After the ceremony, as the participants made their way up the platform and back into the Capitol, political friends and foes were crushed together along the narrow steps. Adlai Stevenson escorted Edith Wilson carefully up the stairs. From there the Democrats turned right, into the old Supreme Court Chamber, where a buffet luncheon awaited them, while the Republicans found their cars and left the grounds. Ike recalled that "Mamie and I, making our way toward a side exit, made a fantastic discovery. We were free." Pat and Dick followed.

Bess Truman lingered right outside the chamber with her husband. At one point the feisty former president walked into the room, but Bess beckoned Harry back into

the corridor: Please, let the Kennedys go in first. Later, seated prominently at the head table with Jackie and Lady Bird, Bess and Edith lunched on Massachusetts lobster and Texas prime ribs. Edith thoroughly enjoyed herself, swapping jokes with Harry, gorging herself on large heaps of the lobster.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Roosevelt and her entourage quietly slipped through the crowds now lining Pennsylvania Avenue waiting for the parade to start. They all attended a small lunch in Eleanor's honor at the Democratic Club room of the Sheraton Carlton. She had turned down her invitation to the presidential luncheon.

A third luncheon was taking place at the F Street Club. It was in honor of the Eisenhowers and hosted by Admiral E. Lewis Strauss, former chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, and his wife. A growing crowd of loyal Republicans waited for their party leaders to arrive. "Mrs. Eisenhower," a reporter wrote, "was her old gay self as she quickly sprinted up the steps outside the club and greeted Admiral Strauss with a hug and a kiss." In the dining room, Dick and Pat, and Cabinet and senior members of the Eisenhower administration, fêted Ike and Mamie in a sentimental grand finale. The entire club was festooned with Mamie Pink roses, sweet peas, and carnations. After lunch, there were some short speeches and a toast. "Hail to the Chief," "Hail! Hail! The Gang's All Here," and "Old Soldiers Never Die" were played on the accordion.

On Capitol Hill, the parade began.

The caravan back to the White House was led by the Kennedys and inaugural officials, followed by Lady Bird, her husband, and House Speaker "Mr. Sam" Rayburn. In a third car, Bess and Harry Truman rode with their former military aide, Major General Vaughan. Behind them was Edith Wilson, riding alone with a female military escort. Once again, Eleanor Roosevelt had been scheduled to take part in events, to ride with Edith. Once again, she had turned the Kennedys down.

As the procession moved up Pennsylvania Avenue, Mrs. Wilson insisted on keeping the top of the Lincoln Continental open, though it was now sixteen degrees. After the car passed the White House, the frozen driver suggested putting the top back on. Three minutes later, the indomitable "Mrs. President" snapped, "Open all the windows. I'm stifling." In the end, though, Edith declined her invitation to view the rest of the parade with the Ken-

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nedys from the reviewing stand, and went home to watch the spectacle on television. An equally exhausted Jacqueline was unable to stand through the entire parade; she retreated into the mansion. Only Bess and Lady Bird stayed on.

Just two blocks away, at the F Street Club, the gathered Republicans were singing "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow" and the West Point song, "Army Blue." At 3:30, the luncheon broke up. Mamie and Ike climbed into her '56 Chrysler, followed by their son, John, and his wife, Barbara, and two cars full of reporters. Mamie said good-bye to Pat. And to Washington.

Some of the luncheon guests wept as the Nixons headed for home. After a vacation in the Bahamas, Pat and her daughters would remain in Washington until the end of the school year. A friend recalled that over the next few months "I had never seen Pat Nixon so happy. She was so glad to be out of politics." In retrospect, Pat's only regret would be that she didn't move to California immediately. Staying in Washington, she later said, proved to be "seven months in limbo."

Twenty-five miles outside Washington, near Germantown, Maryland, on Interstate Route 70, Ike and Mamie's convoy slowed down to acknowledge four students holding signs that read, "Thanks" and "You're the greatest, Ike." Near St. Joseph College in Emmitsburg, it slowed again as they shook hands with some nuns, a few women students, and a priest standing at the roadside. As the winter sunlight quickly faded, the Eisenhowers' cars slipped silently over the snowy fields of Gettysburg, and through the gates to the farmhouse. They were home.

The festivities continued in Washington. As the chairman of the inaugural balls recalled, Jacqueline Kennedy stopped "everybody dead in their tracks!" At one ball, the tuxedoed and gowned hordes shoved and elbowed one another for "advantageous gawking" of Jackie, and the situation reached "stampede proportions," posing a serious danger. The presidential party was advised to leave, instead of dancing and taking its place in a gold-be-decked box. For fifty dollars each, however, the revelers had been able to feast their eyes on Jacqueline.

The new First Lady's natural height was emphasized by her white silk high heels, bouffant hairdo, and dramatic, sweeping white satin cape. Her dress had a strapless white bodice shimmering with brilliants under a translucent white chiffon overblouse. There was that same aura of



majesty around her that had often been perceived around Mrs. Roosevelt. But unknown to anyone except her husband, doctor, and a few aides, Jackie was on the verge of physical collapse. Earlier that day, after the inaugural ceremony, her legs had cramped.

Now, as the presidential party left the Armory, heading to the third of five inaugural balls, Mrs. Kennedy stumbled. An aide rushed to help. "I just crumbled," she recalled. "All my strength was finally gone." Few seemed to remember that less than eight weeks earlier she had undergone a cesarian section. Jacqueline was forced to return to the White House.

Earlier that evening, the Johnsons and the Kennedys had stopped by to visit the Trumans at the Mayflower Hotel. Harry Truman had wanted to go to the Armory Ball; Bess absolutely refused to allow it. The weather was too cold, the drive too unpredictable. But the seemingly nonchalant Bess Truman was actually forlorn about no longer being in the center of it all. "Every time I go to Washington," she had written to a friend in 1957, "it is just a bit harder to have to leave."

Eleanor Roosevelt, dressed in a gold-

and-white brocade gown, did appear with her entourage at the Armory, just in time to see Jackie, Lady Bird, and their husbands, but she didn't stay long. Old Edith Wilson had retired earlier from the fray. And Mamie Eisenhower was settling into the quiet of her Gettysburg farmhouse; in the next few weeks she'd have to face the long job of unpacking the accumulated possessions of several homes from several decades.

Bess, Eleanor, Edith, Mamie. All would visit their old home during the Kennedy years. But, in a very real sense, their inaugural appearances marked a turning point. They were quickly becoming period pieces. There were others now—Jacqueline, Lady Bird, Pat, and Betty—whose time had come.

Experience, not politics, separated the ladies born in the nineteenth century from the "new generation of Americans—born in this century," which the new president had addressed that afternoon in his speech. These twentieth-century women, all children of the Depression, had pursued college educations and professional careers.

Few realized what had happened at this inaugural, least of all the younger women.

The torch had been passed. □

THE BEST DAYS OF THEIR WIVES

Though still the adoring spouse, Barbara Bush speaks her mind on abortion, thus joining Marilyn Quayle in sharing the spotlight—and the microphone—with their husbands

By MICHAEL DUFFY WASHINGTON

THE MORNING AFTER THE NEW York Post published charges that George Bush had an extramarital affair, Noelle Bush, 15, asked her grandmother what all the fuss was about. As the two sat by the White House pool Wednesday morning, Barbara Bush explained that the newspapers were reporting that Noelle's grandfather allegedly had a fling with a former staff member eight years earlier. "Come on, Ganny," said the girl. "That's what they're saying," Mrs. Bush replied. When Noelle broke into giggles, the First Lady upbraided her in mock horror. "That's sort of insulting to your grandfather." Replied Noelle: "That is so funny." Recounting the exchange a few hours later, the First Lady concluded, "Well, I guess he looks ancient to her."

Score one more for Barbara Bush, master of the self-deprecating gesture—particularly in the midst of a crisis that might cause other political spouses to lose their sangfroid. In the course of two days, her husband faced accusations of adultery, backpedaled on abortion and overhauled his political team. Mrs. Bush leaped into the fray herself, staking out a position on abortion well to the President's left, criticizing a top Bush aide in public, and then getting in a lick or two of her own at Bill Clinton. "I'm feisty as the dickens," she said in an interview with newsmagazine correspondents.

In a year when both parties are trying to appeal to disenchanted voters, Republican officials are hoping that Barbara Bush—who is roughly twice as popular as her husband—can bring back many of the

disaffected when she speaks in Houston this week. Convention planners say they are counting on Mrs. Bush's 10-minute remarks—and a five-minute talk by Marilyn Quayle—to be nearly as appealing to female voters as her husband's much longer make-or-break address. "We sometimes

fantasize," said a campaign official, "what it would be like to have Barbara and Marilyn on the ticket."

Ever since the Clarence Thomas hearings last fall, the Republican Party has been struggling to overcome the perception that its regard for women is only a notch or two higher than that of the Navy's Tailhook Association. The hearings galvanized a long-struggling movement to put more women into the House and Senate, and Democrats have rushed to showcase a sizable ballot of women candidates. But the G.O.P. is woefully short on female office seekers, which is one reason why it is calling on Mrs. Bush and Mrs. Quayle to take high-profile convention roles for the first time. In addition, the two women can play the party's family-values card in a way their husbands cannot.

By an ironic quirk of timing, Mrs. Bush was preparing her speech when the latest round of adultery stories erupted. But she was bearing up proudly in an interview the next day. "You know, we're talking about people's lives," she said. "It's really not a very nice thing. I should quickly tell you that the fact this comes up every four years is not an enormous surprise to me, but it's a disappointing one . . . I know it's a lie, so it doesn't bother me. But it bothers me that we've come to this."

BARBARA BUSH

Campaign officials hope the popular First Lady can help bring disaffected women back under the Republican tent



CYNTHIA JOHNSON FOR TIME

Playing with a child at a homeless center in Washington

The Vice President's wife can seem intolerant and combative, but convention planners hope to turn her tough reputation into an asset

Asked to explain more fully her husband's relationship with Jennifer Fitzgerald, a former appointments assistant who now serves as deputy chief of protocol at the State Department, Mrs. Bush described it as "employer-employee." Says Mrs. Bush: "She's a good friend of mine. I mean, it's so ugly, the whole thing. And it's been very deceitful and harmful and ugly. I haven't seen Jennifer, but my heart goes out to her. This is just mean." She said the two had not spoken because Fitzgerald was out of the country.

Mrs. Bush then dropped a bombshell of her own. The decision to have an abortion, she said, is a "personal choice, personal thing." The day before, the President had said he would support a granddaughter who decided to terminate a pregnancy—although his own party is trying to outlaw the procedure unless the mother's life is endangered. Mrs. Bush went well beyond that, saying all discussion of abortion should be removed from the political arena. "The personal things should be left out of, in my opinion, out of platforms at conventions . . . You can argue yourself blue in the face, and you're not going to change each other's minds. It's a waste of your time and my time."

Mrs. Bush had been suspected of harboring pro-choice views for years, but she never before said it publicly to avoid unnecessary skirmishes with the Republican Party's conservative wing. Coming the day after the Fitzgerald boomlet, the pronouncement's timing was curious and set off a round of political speculation. Some thought the abortion comment was an attempt to change the subject from the infidelity flap. Others believed that G.O.P. campaign officials were attempting to have it both ways by having Mrs. Bush woo independent and Republican women who find the party's pro-life platform unrealistic.

Whatever the motivation, Mrs. Bush's remarks put her at odds with Marilyn Quayle. The Vice President's wife last month contradicted her husband's public comments by insisting that if their 13-year-old daughter ever became pregnant out of wedlock, she would "carry the baby to term." Mrs. Bush had little use for this inflexible logic. Said she: "You can't pin a child down and say, 'You can't have an abortion; that's against the law.'" But the First Lady quickly added that any differences between the two women were a measure of the G.O.P.'s diversity. "[Marilyn] does it differently. That's what's big about our party."

In fact, Mrs. Quayle differs from the President's wife in many ways. While the First Lady's image is cuddly and grandmotherly, Marilyn Quayle can seem hard, intolerant and combative. "I'm a great devil's advocate," she explained in an interview with *TIME*. "I can pierce holes through anything." Convention organizers will try to turn her tough-as-nails rep-

utation into a political asset. Her midweek address on health care and education will mark the first time a Vice President's wife has ever given an actual convention speech. "The idea," said a planner, "is to show women voters that you can be a Republican and not just wear Talbots and pearls and join the Junior League."

Ever since a *Washington Post* series on her husband last winter depicted her as a power-mad spouse who once kicked to shreds a framed picture of her husband playing golf, Mrs. Quayle has been trying to soften her Cruella De Vil image. She is cooler in interviews and slower to anger. She proudly announces that she saves money by shopping monthly at the Price Club and that her kids come home and eat tuna "right out of the can." Normally careful to shield her children from public scrutiny, she now admits the abortion gaffe was unfortunate and "embarrassing" to her daughter Corinne. "We have reared our daughter so this would have to be a hypothetical situation," said Mrs. Quayle. But, she added, the girl "was not pleased."

But Corinne's mother has her independent streak as well. She takes issue, for example, with the President's wish that philandering charges have no part in a political campaign. "That's all part of the character issues," she insisted. "And any-

Relaxing on the lawn of the family's official residence with her dog Chili

one who is going to be President—you do look at the character of the person. That's what makes a person whole." Such remarks led a party official to quip, "She's our answer to Hillary."

The our-wife-can-top-your-wife game can be carried too far. No sooner had Bush been accused of infidelity than G.O.P. chairman Rich Bond attacked Mrs. Clinton for likening marriage to slavery—a gross distortion of an educational review article she wrote in 1973. But Mrs. Bush, as if she were waging a one-woman campaign to court the political middle, publicly chastised Bond for his remarks. "I didn't like it," she said. "She's not running for office." Mrs. Bush added, "I know a lot of wonderful men married to pills, and I know a lot of pills married to wonderful women. So one shouldn't judge that way."

But it is bound to happen. In an era of sound bites and short attention spans, when complex issues like deficit reduction and health care often seem too difficult to understand, many voters will simply choose the candidate who best fits their "values." And one way to judge a man's values is to look at the woman he married.

—With reporting by Ann Blackman/Washington



LYNN JOHNSON—BLACK STAR FOR TIME

Let Go of Guilt • Helpful Men Make Better Lovers • Lunchbox Tips

WorkingMother

SEPTEMBER 1992

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Politics 1992

The Year of the Woman



The men in power don't understand the issues in working mothers' lives, says Senate hopeful Patty Murray, above. "Who among them worries about getting time off to care for a sick child?"

A record number of women are running for office this election. These are the races that could change your family's future ■ By Salley Shannon

The decision to run for the U.S. Senate crystallized for Patty Murray as she sat, like the rest of us, glued to the tube, watching the Clarence Thomas confirmation hearings. "I realized there was a voice missing from the Senate, a voice like mine: a working mom's," says Murray, currently Democratic whip in the Washington state senate. The 14 white male Senators on the Judiciary Committee "seemed so isolated from the realities of everyday life," let alone sexual harassment in the workplace, she recalls.

"I looked at those men and thought, no wonder we're in a mess. Who among them has ever gone without health care because of no insurance? Who among them worries about getting time off to care for a sick child? Do any of them ever watch the clock to make sure they pick up the kids on time, then grab a pizza somewhere because they haven't had time to think about dinner?"

The driving force behind Washington state's family-leave law, Murray (featured on our cover) is running in her state's Democratic primary this month. Her platform is a simple one: "I want our government returned to real people." With two children of her own ages 12 and 16, she has pledged to do something about family issues such as child care, health care and family leave. Her outsider status and reform-minded approach seem to strike a chord among Washington state voters.

It's the same chord that's reverberating across the nation. In an election season characterized by exasperation with established politicians, it's a good year to be a political outsider. And female candidates are the ultimate outsiders. Just two of the nation's 100 Senators and only 28 of the 435 Representatives are women. At the state level, women have done a little better: About 18 percent of state legislators are women; in 10 states,

women hold 25 percent or more of the seats. But even at that rate, they can hardly be perceived as insiders.

Women are also doing well this year because they are seen as more honest, an asset in a year when many Americans are focused on the integrity of their elected officials.

The Difference Women Make

But there are far more compelling reasons for working mothers to support female candidates. The record shows that the few women who have gained a voice in government have made a critical difference for all women in nearly every aspect of their lives. Women can now obtain credit in their own name—anything from a credit card to a business loan—thanks to women in Congress who championed laws to ensure that women have the same access to credit men enjoy. Female legislators also helped push through the pregnancy-discrimination and equal-pay laws now on the books, and are currently fighting for family leave, funds for child care and women's health issues.

"People in the 1990s assume that women have always had an absolute right to get a credit card or own a home. But if it hadn't been for the women members of Congress, that wouldn't be true," says Leslie Wolfe, executive director of the Center for Women Policy Studies in Washington, D.C.

One recent study of national and state lawmakers conducted by the Center for the American Woman and Politics at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey, found that women are more likely than men to work on bills that directly touch women's lives—the "real life" concerns that Senate hopeful Murray talks about. For example, 59 percent of the women lawmakers, compared to only 36 percent of the men, worked on some type of women's rights bill during the most recent leg-



Californians may give both their U.S. Senate seats to women. Dianne Feinstein, former mayor of San Francisco (pictured at podium above), and Barbara Boxer, a Congresswoman, could supply two more votes for the family-leave bill.



U.S. Senate candidate Lynn Yeakel, top photo, is on record in favor of family leave and tax incentives for businesses that provide child care benefits. Geraldine Ferraro, above, who ran for Vice President in 1984, is now making a bid for the Senate. She has pledged to work for a plan that would make health insurance available to all Americans.



Susan Stokes, a pro-choice Republican running for the House, conducted an energetic grass-roots campaign in Kentucky and beat her male opponents in the primaries.

Make Child Care An Issue!

Somehow, child care has vanished from the political agenda this year. "Four years ago, child care was the hot issue. A lot of candidates visited day care centers. It even came up in the Presidential debates," notes Barbara Reisman, executive director of the Child Care Action Campaign. "But now no one is even mentioning it."

Part of the reason lies in the fact that Congress passed a bill two years ago to provide more money for care for low-income children. "Everyone in Congress now acts like 'Oh, we dealt with that already. Don't bother us about that now,'" says Helen Blank of the Children's Defense Fund. Even with the passage of this legislation, child care advocates are disappointed with the regulations promulgated by the Administration, which limit states' ability to provide safe and healthy child care.

Furthermore, several studies reveal that the quality of the nation's child care may be deteriorating. A recent study by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, for example, showed that the number of children in many group day care situations has increased—even though most child care experts agree that smaller groups are better for kids. Research also shows that the turnover rate among caregivers remains alarmingly high, creating an unstable situation for children and parents alike.

What can you do? Write to the candidates about child care. Ask them what plans they have for improving the supply and quality of child care in this country. Invite a candidate to your child care center and ask the same questions. "If people don't raise the issue, politicians think it has gone away," warns Barbara Reisman.

islative session. Female public officials are also more likely to give priority to the issues of families and health care.

One key federal bill, the Family and Medical Leave Act, which would provide working parents with unpaid time off to care for a newborn or seriously ill family member, made it through Congress with women lobbying hard for it—only to be vetoed by President Bush. With the current heavily male Senate, it has been impossible to override the President's veto. New female faces in the Senate could help to change that.

Your Vote Counts

Many female voters already grasp these issues—and they have created a year of upsets. Voter exit polls showed that women's support made the crucial difference in at least two Senate primary races: those of Democrat Carol Moseley Braun of Illinois, who is featured on our cover, and Lynn Yeakel of Pennsylvania, also a Democrat. "Until this year, we have never seen women rushing to the polls to vote for women," notes Harriett Woods, executive director of the National Women's Political Caucus. "But in many races now, we see women marching into the voting booth and looking for women's names up and down the ticket. We haven't seen that before, but I wager we'll see it again."

If her prediction is true—that women will vote for other women in hopes of getting better representation of their concerns and wishes—the political landscape could be radically altered come November. Not only are there more women voters, but in every election since 1980, a higher percentage of women have voted.

Those votes could help women make serious headway at every level of politics. There are

more Congressional seats available in 1992 than at any time since World War II. As we go to press, some 80 of the 435 House seats are up for grabs, in large part because so many incumbents have resigned or been defeated in primaries. In addition, the nation is undergoing redistricting—the lines of every Congressional district are being reviewed, a process triggered by the 1990 Census. (By law, the districts must be roughly representative of the population, and so they change as the census count changes.) As a result, many new districts are being carved out of old ones. That process does not necessarily favor women per se, but it does give all newcomers a better shot at winning. "I can't stress how important this is," says Woods. Put simply, she says, "redrawing the district lines could mean very serious gains for women."

Indeed, victories now can bring long-lasting change. Once women win office, they gain more acceptance among voters, which makes them more likely to win future elections. As incumbents, they also have name recognition and an easier time raising campaign funds, crucial elements in winning subsequent political contests.

Some astute women have taken control of the redistricting process. Eddie Bernice Johnson, a Texas state senator who chaired the committee on Congressional redistricting, was savvy enough to carve out a new district for herself in the process. Johnson, an African-American, won more than 92 percent of the Democratic primary vote in her heavily minority district and seems assured of winning her race for a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Few women are guaranteed such easy victories, but more and more are willing to give it a try. As we go to press, 18 women are running



Hillary Clinton: Working Mom In the White House?

By Vivian Cadden

Hillary Rodham Clinton would be a First Lady unlike any we have known before: a young woman who combines motherhood with a serious professional career. For her the concerns of today's working mothers are not a theoretical matter; they are part and parcel of her life, and she speaks of them with a mixture of intelligence and empathy.

"When I got pregnant with Chelsea, thirteen years ago," she recalls, "no one in my office knew what to make of it. It was as if there had never been a pregnant lawyer before. In those days there wasn't any real discussion of maternity leave or part-time work, and I didn't talk about it either."

But Clinton, who's featured on our cover, had made partner in her firm that year, so she could set her own terms. In the end, she took four months off and then worked a reduced schedule for another two months. She says she was "lucky" to find an older woman who would come in each morning when she went to work. Lucky, too, she says, that her office was only five minutes away from home. "I could actually take a baby break instead of a lunch or coffee break and come home and feed Chelsea."

This experience was "very precious" to Clinton and explains her passion for the family-leave bill now in Congress that would give parents time off to care for a newborn. "If women could have four months to be full-time moth-

ers and then some flexibility on the job, we could move back and forth more easily between our roles," she says.

Yet even with such accommodations, she found that working at a demanding job while mothering was not always easy. "When Chelsea was four or five, she went through a stage of asking 'Why do you have to go to work?' Ah, there's the guilt that strikes your heart," Clinton says. "I don't know any mother who doesn't have pangs sometimes about leaving. There are times when a child badly wants more of you. I took Chelsea to the office when I could. She went to Bill's, too. There was a corner in his office that was hers, with crayons and paper where she could do coloring. I took work home a lot and did it after she was in bed."

The struggle for women, she believes, is to find some balance in their lives, and women have to do it the way that's best for them. She was 30 and well into her career before she had Chelsea. Yet some of her friends have made totally different choices. Some had their babies right out of college. Another had her first child at 45.

Although Clinton thoroughly enjoys her outstanding legal career (she was twice voted among the 100 most influential lawyers in America in polls taken by the *National Law Journal*), she acknowledges that she will probably have to give it up if she becomes First Lady. "If Bill is elected," she says, "it will be hard, if not impossible, for me to continue to practice law. There are legitimate questions of conflict of interest." But she is not bothered that she may have to shift from being chief breadwinner of the family to serving in some capacity as an unpaid adjunct to the government. "Whatever I do, I want to continue to be a voice and an advocate for children," she says firmly.

An advocate for children is indeed what she has been ever since she graduated from Yale Law School 20 years ago. As a legal writer and teacher, as president of the Children's Defense Fund, as First Lady of Arkansas and on the campaign trail with her husband over the past year, she has spoken about the needs of children.

Most urgent, she believes, is the need for basic, primary and preventive health care for all people, but especially for children and expectant mothers.

She sees a health care system with routine well-baby checkups and immunizations as a means of promoting child health and lowering the country's "shameful" infant mortality rate.

She is an enthusiastic advocate of vastly expanded preschool education, not only for economically disadvantaged children, as in Head Start, but for other children as well. She believes the United States lags far behind other advanced industrialized countries, which have sophisticated systems, including family allowances and free nursery schools, to support families.

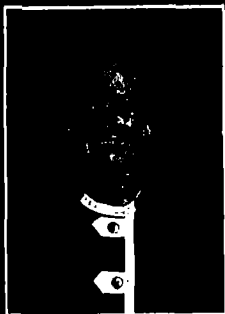
"We have no family policy in this country," she charges. "Instead of helping families, government watches them disintegrate. Each individual woman is supposed to make her own way, to manage as best she can. But that is not right. We have to build networks to support mothers and reestablish the importance of child rearing for the country."

In many cases, she recognizes, that means bolstering the economic security of families: "We need to create concrete help for families so women have the option of staying home at certain stages of their lives and have better-paying jobs when they work. Too many working mothers are among the working poor." She also advocates a flexible workplace to help women balance their needs on the job and at home.

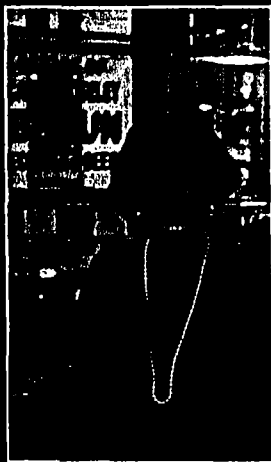
Clinton notes that some politicians long to return women to the home. "When things are not going well, when life is stressful and sometimes violent, when we are stepping over the homeless, it is natural to want to go back to what seemed like simpler times. But we can't go back." Families have changed. What we can do, she says, is "return to the old values of caring and willingness to serve and translate those values into new terms." Terms that meet the needs of today's families, where both Mom and Dad work.

Vivian Cadden is the founding editor of WORKING MOTHER.

Editor's note: The White House turned down our request for an interview with Barbara Bush about modern motherhood. Ross Perot was not yet a declared candidate at our press deadline, so we did not pursue an interview with Margot Perot. ►



Dolly Madison McKenna, above, is a tough-minded business executive who pledges to make health care a top priority if she is elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.



Carol Moseley Braun, a Senate hopeful from Illinois, is a single mom who promises to fight for more funding for early-childhood education if she is elected. She also favors increased college-loan and scholarship funds for middle-class families.

for the Senate and 116 for the House. Filing deadlines and primary elections are still to come in some states, but it's certain that there are far more female candidates than in 1990.

At the state level, women have been making steady gains over the last two decades: Eight states have elected female governors, and 145 of the nation's 900 largest cities have chosen female mayors. Women in 14 states hold the title of state treasurer, a traditional stepping-stone to governor. Now hundreds more women have entered the fray, hoping to reshape policies on such issues as child care, health and education. The New Hampshire primary this month could pit two women against each other for governor of that state: Democrat Deborah Arnie Arnesen may be on the ballot against Republican Elizabeth Hager.

More Money Flows to Women

Still, women face a big hurdle in the general election: money. In the past, lack of campaign funds killed off many good female candidates. Political action committees like to put their dollars behind a winner—and women were hardly ever judged to be likely victors. Moreover, when few women were working, they had little money to give to candidates.

That is gradually changing, as women candi-

dates and women's groups think more strategically. There are now more groups than ever organized to channel funds to women candidates (see "Put Your Money Where Your Heart Is"). And this year, they report a two- and threefold increase, compared to 1990, in the amounts of money women are contributing to candidates. "The money is off the charts this year," says Jane Danowitz, executive director of the Women's Campaign Fund, a bipartisan political action committee dedicated to getting more women into office. "And it isn't just the amounts coming in that's important," she adds. "We're getting first-time donors at twice the rate as before. Thousands of women are writing checks to women candidates." Not only that, but "often with the check comes a note asking 'What can I do to help?' We're building a solid base to elect women candidates in 1994 and 1996, and we're bringing in serious numbers of women as contributors and activists."

And none too soon. Women's progress in politics has been painfully slow in the past. They hold only 11 more seats in the House than they did three decades ago. "We are easily trivialized as mascots," Representative Patricia Schroeder (D-Colo.) has been known to huff. If women continued to be elected to office at the same pace as in recent elections, it would take 294

Put Your Money Where Your Heart Is

Whether we like it or not, money often makes the critical difference in a political campaign. Funds are needed to open an office, hire staff, travel to meet voters, take out advertising and make commercials. And unfortunately, in the past, many eminently qualified women candidates lost out because they simply didn't have the funds.

Keep in mind that even small contributions help candidates who are struggling to win. Your check not only signals financial support, but a potential vote in November—and that helps build momentum. If both you and your husband want to give, make out separate checks. That way, the candidates will know that two voters support women and a family-friendly agenda.

Better yet, invite 20 of your friends and neighbors over for a Saturday morning fundraiser or ask everyone in your office to brown-bag it one day and send their usual lunch money to one of the funds—or directly to your favorite candidate. Make sure that you include the names of all the donors—those numbers do matter to the politicians.

Here's how to find these funds:

EMILY's List (Early Money Is Like Yeast—it makes the dough rise), Democrats only, pro-choice. Members donate \$100 or

more to at least two candidates EMILY's List recommends. For more information, write: EMILY's List, 1112 16th Street NW, Suite 750, Washington, DC 20036.

National Women's Political Caucus, bipartisan, pro-choice. Checks to: NWPC Victory Fund, 1275 K Street #750, Washington, DC 20005-4051.

The Leader PAC (Political Action Committee), Republicans only, no stand on abortion issues. Funds women running for U.S. House and Senate who have received the Republican nomination in their districts. Any amount accepted. People can earmark checks if they want money going only to a pro-choice or pro-life candidate. Checks to: The Leader PAC, PO Box 7001, Fairfax Station, VA 22039-7001.

WISH List (Women In the Senate and House), Republicans only, pro-choice. Members donate \$100 annually and contribute an additional \$100 to at least two candidates WISH List recommends. For more information, write: WISH List, 210 West Front Street, Red Bank, NJ 07701.

Women's Campaign Fund, bipartisan, pro-choice. Checks to: Women's Campaign Fund, 120 Maryland Avenue NE, Washington, DC 20002.

—KARA SKRUCK

Politics 1992

years for female candidates to gain half the seats in Congress.

Danowitz and other fund-raisers believe that the Clarence Thomas hearings brought these statistics home for many women. Whether you believed Anita Hill or not, "you saw fourteen white men on the Senate Judiciary Committee humiliating a tremendously impressive woman, and there was not one woman on the committee to be an advocate for her or for women's rights," explains Danowitz. "Women got angry, and they are still angry. I think those hearings changed the political landscape."

Still, most political observers are waiting to see whether all this momentum will carry over to the general election. Many expect the November races to be much tougher for women, as they face well-funded, no-holds-barred opposition.

Senator Robert Dole (R-Kan.) recently dismissed a possible political breakthrough for women as liberal hype, according to the *New York Times*. But you and your neighbors will cast the votes that make the difference.

Key Races Around the Country

To help you with your choices, we've talked with political consultants, women's advocates and political fund-raisers to identify some of the most interesting races around the country.

California Voters here tend to be trend-setters, and this year they have a chance to make history: They could make their state the first to give both their Senate seats to women. Barbara Boxer, a five-term Representative, and Dianne Feinstein, former mayor of San Francisco, won their Democratic primaries in June. Both favor family-leave legislation and have strong records on women's rights in the workplace. These women will face tough fights in the fall; no one is predicting the outcome as we go to press.

Voters in this state may also send a record number of women to the House of Representatives, with 18 female candidates on the ballot for those seats. Democrat Anita Perez Ferguson, professor of Chicano studies at California State University, could become the first Hispanic woman from California to sit in the House. She is currently vice president of the National Women's Political Caucus.

In a neighboring district, Gloria Ochoa, also a Democrat, an environmental toxicologist who went to law school with the

hope of being able to do more to protect farm workers from pesticides, is on the ballot. With her campaign slogan "Putting Children and Families First," Ochoa emphasizes her commitment to health care and cleaning up the environment.

District of Columbia Democratic Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton is running for reelection to the House. Norton once chaired the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and has a long record of commitment to advancing the rights of women and minorities.

Illinois Carol Moseley Braun became a national celebrity overnight when she won the Democratic primary for the U.S. Senate, becoming the first African-American woman to have a real chance at a Senate seat. Her victory last spring came as the first strong sign that women will do well this year. The November race, when she faces Republican Richard Williamson, is expected to be very tight.

Kentucky Access to child care and health care are of prime interest to candidate Susan Stokes, a Republican running for a House seat. A champion of women's rights, she nevertheless shares her party's view that government's influence should be limited—she opposes any form of government mandate and therefore opposes the family-leave bill passed by Congress this year. A pro-choice candidate, Stokes has been helped by women who fear the Supreme Court may overturn current abortion rights.

Maine Olympia Snowe, already a Representative in the House and co-chair of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues, is up for reelection. Snowe has worked hard to advance bills to improve women's pay, secure family leave and create openings for women in high-paying male-dominated careers.

Maryland One of the two women currently in the U.S. Senate, Barbara Mi-

kulski, a Democrat, is running for reelection this fall. Promising newcomer Michele Dyson is seeking a seat in the House. A black businesswoman, Republican Dyson stresses her commitment to creating jobs and improving local schools. She is against government-mandated benefits, such as family leave, but does favor tax credits to businesses that provide child care.

New Hampshire Voters here may put a woman in the governor's office. Elizabeth Hager, a pro-choice Republican who has asked her party to eliminate the abortion issue from its national platform, is running strongly in the Republican primary. A moderate in this conservative state, Hager emphasizes the need to reform the state's tax system as a way to improve local schools. She may face Democrat Deborah Arnie Arnesen, a state legislator known for her ability to break legislative logjams with compromises. Unlike some of their male opponents, both of these women have refused to rule out new taxes as a way to solve some of the state's nettlesome economic problems. Will voters opt for their honesty or vote for male opponents who have promised not to raise taxes?

New York The fireworks are just beginning in this state, with two strong Democratic women, former Vice Presidential candidate Geraldine Ferraro and New York City Comptroller Elizabeth Holtzman, vying for their party's nomination for the U.S. Senate. Ferraro, the front-runner as we go to press, issued several important stands: She favors the family-leave bill, universal health insurance and targeted cuts in defense spending and is pro-choice on abortion. Holtzman, who served in the House several years back, takes similar stands on the issues except for defense; she favors radical cutbacks in the military budget. State attorney general Robert Abrams and the

Register to Vote at Your Day Care Center

To make it easier for everyone to vote in the crucial November elections, WORKING MOTHER magazine is joining with the League of Women Voters to include child care centers in the League's national voter registration drive September 12 through 19. KinderCare Learning Centers has already agreed to join the drive and urged directors to make space available at their centers for the drive.

You can get involved by talking to the director of your own child's center to see if she would allow parents to register to vote as they pick up and drop off their children. Your local League of Women Voters chapter can provide you with information on how to get started. If you can't find the League's number in your area, call headquarters in Washington, D.C.: 202-429-1965.

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controversial local politician Al Sharpton are also seeking the Democratic nomination. If either Ferraro or Holtzman wins the primary, she will face not only the incumbent Republican Senator Alfonse D'Amato, but Abrams as well, since he has already been selected as the nominee of the Liberal party.

Ohio Incumbent Representative Mary Rose Oakar, a Democrat, is fighting for her political life as she faces charges of bouncing checks in the House bank. Oakar has long been a voice for women's economic progress, one of the few persistent voices in favor of reforming the Social Security system to make it more equitable for women. Also in Ohio, a promising young politician, Jane Campbell, is being watched closely by many national women's groups. Campbell is running for reelection to the Ohio House, where she chairs the Committee on Children and Youth. Campbell, a working mother, takes special pride in remembering that she was eight months pregnant (Ohio's first pregnant legislator) when she pushed through a budget amendment to provide health coverage for poor pregnant women and their children. Since then, her name has been on state laws to

regulate adult day care, correct discrimination against pregnant teachers and ensure that domestic-violence shelters get state money on time.

Pennsylvania Lynn Yeakel, Democratic nominee for the U.S. Senate, is running in one of the hottest races in the country. Yeakel managed to pull off an upset victory in the primary, and now faces incumbent Republican Arlen Specter, one of the Senators on the Judiciary Committee that conducted the Clarence Thomas hearings. Though Specter has received good marks from women's groups in the past, his probing questions of Hill during the televised hearing have cost him female support. Yeakel is on record in favor of family leave as well as tax relief for middle-class working parents. She would support tax incentives for businesses that offer child care benefits.

Emmy Award-winning journalist and working mother Marjorie Margolies Mezvinsky has given up covering the news for the opportunity to make some in Pennsylvania. A Democratic candidate for a seat in the House of Representatives, she has pledged to make the problems of sexual harassment and access to child care her first priorities if elected.

Texas Dolly Madison McKenna (featured on our cover), a Republican candidate for the House and the mother of two children, has pledged to make health care one of her top priorities if elected. A business owner herself, she's in favor of using government policy to encourage private solutions to the nation's problems. She argues, for example, that it would be better to use tax incentives to increase the number of child care slots in this country, rather than try to set up government-sponsored child care centers. She has not taken a position on family leave, but says she opposes most government mandates. She is pro-choice on abortion, a potent issue in Texas.

The women in these races have a chance to change the look of everything, from the Senate Judiciary Committee to the Supreme Court. "These candidates represent a watershed shift in public attitudes," says Harriett Woods of the National Women's Political Caucus. But only if they're elected. This year, it's clear that your vote counts more than ever. ■

Salley Shannon writes on politics, health and women's issues for a number of national publications.

On the appointed night, Dolly Madison sat regally at the head of a long table in the State Dining Room. The guests were distinguished. They included Henry Clay, John Randolph, and Secretary of State James Monroe. (Where was the Vice-President? He was nowhere to be seen. As several wags expressed it, whoever was elected Vice-President was generally never heard from again.) Dolly's sisters Anna and Lucy were radiantly present. Washington Irving, then the literary rage, called the three sisters "the Merry Wives of Windsor." Several notable beauties of the day added to the pleasure of the gentlemen.

The gentlemen wore light-blue or green frock coats, garnished with gilt or pearl buttons, and tall shirt collars reaching to their ears. James Monroe, though, insisted on wearing a powdered wig, knee breeches, black silk stockings, and buckled pumps.

President Madison, however, wore his usual black "small clothes," black stockings, and a wig. Washington Irving was singularly unimpressed by Madison's sartorial indifference. "Poor Jemmy Madison—he is but a withered little applejohn," Irving wrote after a White House visit. (Madison's nickname was Jemmy, and at five feet six inches he was our shortest President.) Another writer called Madison "sallow, solemn and studious."

Dolly, on the other hand, was the life of the party. A contemporary account of the 1811 affair described her:

"Mr. Madison is content to occupy the background at any sort of entertainment in the White House. His wife is the conspicuous figure dominating the brilliant scene on this Christmas evening, as always when festivities are in progress. She is a magnificent looking woman, forty-three years old (on this point there is a little dispute) tall, stately, buxom and rosy. Anxious to delay the flight of time as manifested in her own charming person, she wears much rouge—enough indeed to be perceptible in a very bright light. People say of her that she insists on staying the same age for many years together."

Dolly wore a vivid purple velvet dress, pearls, and many bracelets. She had redecorated the State Dining Room with mirrors and a solid silver candelabra that held over a hundred candles. There were banks of flowers.

Dolly had haggled with furniture dealers to get the most for her money. Congress had provided only \$11,000 to refurbish the executive mansion. (Actually, the mansion was not white at that

time. It was built of Virginia sandstone and appeared brown in color. It was also called the President's Palace rather than executive mansion or White House.) Dolly's crowning achievement was yellow satin over the fireplace.

Entertaining in 1811 was quite inexpensive. Turkeys cost 75 cents apiece, ducks 50 cents, and a whole suckling pig only \$3.00. Waiters, who were generally slaves rented by their masters for a day, were paid 35 cents for an evening party.

E. Pendleton Hogan described the dinner.

"After the Virginia country manner all the food was put on the table at once. Turkeys, chickens, canvas-back ducks, and roasted wild game. Vegetables, fruit and several kinds of pudding. For every guest there was a waiter, extra ones having been hired for the occasion.

"Dinner lasted for one hour, and then Colonel Monroe offered the customary toast, drunk standing, to the ladies. This was the signal for the ladies to withdraw; the ladies withdrew. Then with the Yuletide custom of Colonial days a great punchbowl was brought into the dining room and the gentlemen began their really serious drinking. A few glasses made even Mr. Madison relax and become anecdotal, and it is said that he knew some good stories. Finally, upon Mr. Madison's suggestion, the gentlemen rejoined the ladies in the Oval Room, which is now the Blue Room."

After dinner Dolly Madison initiated a number of popular games. Then came singing and dancing. But revelers retired early in those days. By ten o'clock the guests began to depart. Their carriages arrived at the South Entrance, where the regally attired guests had to fight their way through a mudhole before entering their carriages. All in all, it was a splendid evening.

An amusing incident transpired on Christmas Eve in 1815. Mrs. Madison brought her pet macaw into the dining room to amuse the children and guests at her annual Christmas party. But the bird ran after a young guest named Mary and attached itself to the child's feet. The terrified girl screamed and jumped onto a chair, clutching the First Lady. Mrs. Madison thought it was all "quite a frolic."

Guns fired all night—a custom associated with Southern Christmases in those days. The Madisons were happy that Christmas, because the War of 1812 had ended and because Dolly's troublesome son Payne was home. Dolly created her special cinna-

mon-sprinkled eggnog and tried to re-create a Virginia plantation Christmas, complete with candlelight, holly, and running cedar.

A lively dance was held in the East Room in late December, 1828, to celebrate the departure of John Quincy and Louisa Adams from the White House. Adams had been defeated for re-election a month earlier. The U.S. Marine Band played the latest tunes. The ladies wore elegant gowns and the officers were resplendent in their dress uniforms. The President looked happy. He greeted guests jovially and danced the Virginia Reel.

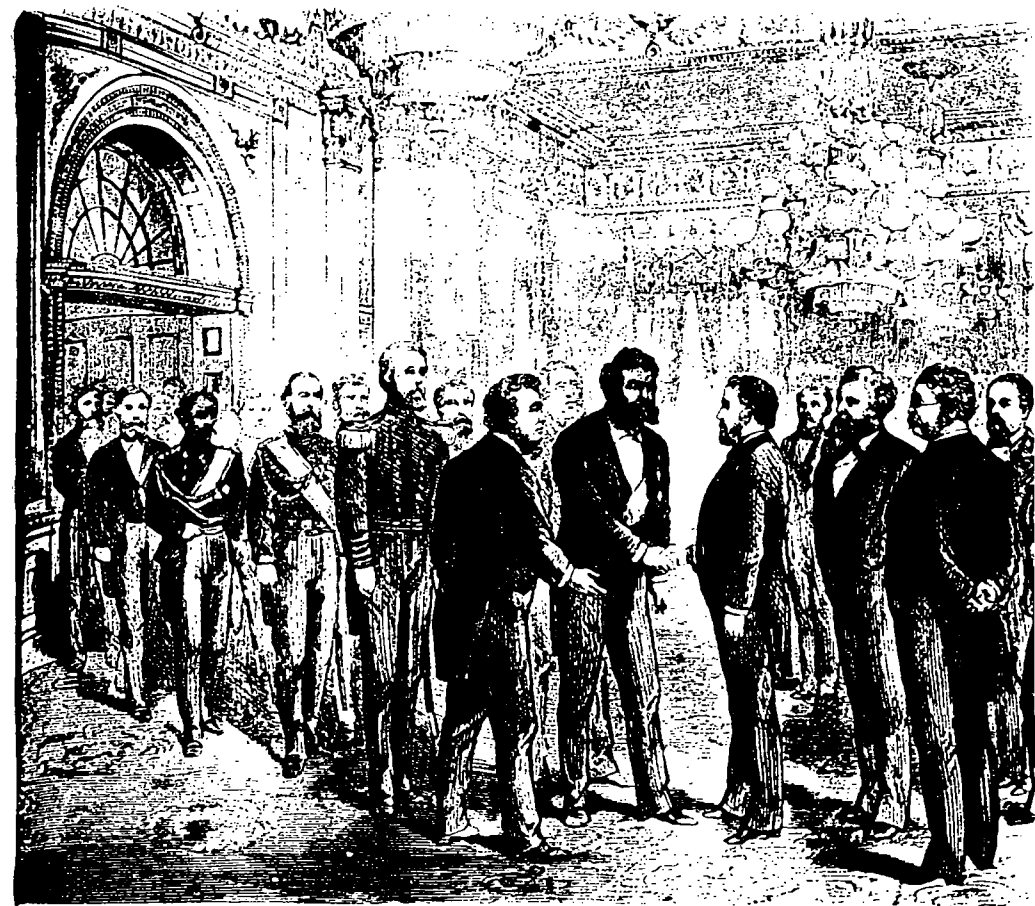
In 1844, President John Tyler's spirited second wife, Julia, had decorated the White House with wreaths of evergreen. Even the portrait of George Washington, which gazed down on the festive scene, was clad in holiday greenery. The food was again reminiscent of Virginia plantation fare, varied and bountiful. The First Lady was obviously enjoying the season. She reported to her diary, "We commenced the day with eggnog and concluded with apple toddy." Parties abounded at "Julia's court."

Even the sober President and Mrs. James K. Polk gave a reception on Christmas Eve 1847. The only account of that evening came from a Washington correspondent who was present. His report concentrated on the guest list and the clothing styles rather than on the spirit of Christmas. His rather tongue-in-cheek commentary included these observations:

"Last evening I had an opportunity of seeing the members of the royal family, together with some choice specimens of the Democracy in the 'circle room' of the White House. It was reception night and the latch-string in the shape of a handsome negro was 'outside the door.' On entering I found a comfortable room full, with a little man, whom I would have taken in any other place for a Methodist parson, standing before the fire, bowing and shaking hands in the most precise and indiscriminate manner. He is affable and ordinary enough in conversation to prevent one from feeling that he is in direct communication with the concentrated Majesty of the whole United States and Territories. Mr. Polk is not a man to inspire awe.

"The better half of the President was seated on the sofa, engaged with some half a dozen ladies in lively conversation."

Among the guests were politicians, bankers, financiers, and military officers. Present also were "two pretty deaf and dumb girls who talked with their fingers and scores of other attractive women who only talked with their eyes," according to the



President and Mrs. Grant held a "brilliant" Christmas dinner in honor of the King of Hawaii, December 23, 1874

report of this observant journalist.

One of the strangest Christmas "parties" took place in 1860, when the lonely bachelor, President James Buchanan, invited a delegation of Pawnee Indians to a gathering at the White House during the holidays. The Indians were somewhat ill at ease with their Great White Father.

Two years later, the city of Washington was full of wounded soldiers in numerous hospitals. The women of the city had arranged parties to be held at each hospital. President and Mrs. Lincoln and some cabinet members visited the hospital on Judiciary Square in the afternoon of Christmas Day. They were pleased with the thoughtfulness and generosity shown to the recuperating soldiers.