



The WASP ideal: Theodore Roosevelt and family in 1874. Roosevelt declared his opposition to plutocracy and mob rule but thought there was "something to be said" for aristocracy.

ture and a sense of its role in American history, is not likely to produce leaders even in the small numbers that the WASP ascendancy did. Somehow, Alsop believes,

we must found a new self-conscious elite to create future generations of "wise men more representative of the mixed America that gives me such pride."

A Thousand Points of Bite

"Confessions of a Ghost" by Patrick Anderson, in *Regardie's* (Nov. 1989), 1010 Wisconsin Ave. N.W., Ste. 600, Washington, D.C. 20007.

Patrick Anderson says he must have been "temporarily insane" when he first agreed to write a speech for a politician. He wrote it in the spring of 1976 for Jimmy Carter, then a candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination. Carter introduced this new "Kennedyesque" marvel by woodenly informing an audience, "Now I'm going to read a statement my staff prepared." Then he plodded through the text.

Carter's press secretary, Jody Powell, later explained to Anderson that "it was just part of Carter's I'll-never-tell-you-a-lie

posture." Anderson eventually realized that "it galled [Carter] to speak my words, because it suggested that he couldn't do everything himself." Unlike many of his competitors, however, Carter had more ambition than ego.

Most politicians, says Anderson, who went on to write speeches for other Democrats, "don't know what they want to say. They really don't want to say anything, because almost anything they say will offend someone." With rare exceptions, "they hate brevity, scorn clarity, and fear their

own humanity." Moreover, aides and advisors struggle over every word the candidate is supposed to utter, and speechwriting becomes a bureaucratic battle, as it eventually did in the Carter White House.

Because of the growing importance of TV news, however, their struggles are increasingly irrelevant. Working for Senator John Glenn (D.-Ohio) in 1983, Anderson wrote a long, dull speech announcing Glenn's candidacy for the Democratic nomination. It was a carefully calculated risk, intended to show Glenn as a substantive thinker rather than a glamorous ex-astronaut. But Glenn gave the speech in his Ohio hometown, and TV newscasters

chose to cover it as a heartwarming Hero Goes Home story. "Our dreary speech didn't matter a whit," says Anderson.

During the 1988 primaries, Anderson played a minor role in Senator Albert Gore's (D.-Tenn.) campaign. But Gore gave his all to "debate prep" and paid little attention to his speeches. "To the media, and thus to the candidates, the primary-season debates promised conflict, drama, news; speeches were a bother, a yawn, an afterthought."

Since political rhetoric does not really matter anymore, Anderson jestingly proposes a ban on speechwriters. Perhaps that would force our leaders to learn again how to speak to the American public.

Turning Crimson?

The Bush administration as dissected by Dinah Wisenberg of the States News Service, in *Common Cause Magazine* (Sept.-Oct. 1989).

In the heat of [the 1988] presidential campaign, George Bush attacked Michael Dukakis for espousing liberal policies "born in Harvard Yard's boutique." And he boasted to a Houston audience last June, "when I wanted to learn the ways of the world, I

didn't go to the Kennedy School [at Harvard]. I came to Texas."

One year later, President Bush's Harvard-bashing days seem to be behind him. Of the 200-plus appointments made by the Yale-educated president, more than four dozen are Harvard University graduates or faculty members. Some Texans may also be surprised that several high-ranking White House aides have ties to Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

The Dark Side Of Federalism

Much of the initiative in government during the past decade has shifted from Washington to the nation's state houses and city halls. And liberals and conservatives alike seem to applaud the growth of governments "closer to the people." The "people," however, may be paying a high price.

Witt, a staff writer for *Governing*, reports that federal criminal indictments of state, city, county, and other local officials have grown tenfold over the past 20 years. In

"Is Government Full of Crooks, Or Are We Just Better at Finding Them?" by Elder Witt, in *Governing* (Sept. 1989), 1414 22nd St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037, and "The Effectiveness of State Economic Development Policies: A Time-Series Analysis" by Margery Marzahn Ambrosius, in *The Western Political Quarterly* (Sept. 1989), Univ. of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah 84112.

1970, there were 36 officials under federal indictment; in 1987, there were 348. No reliable data exist on state and local prosecutions.

Yet more indictments do not necessarily mean that there is more corruption. As Witt notes, ethics laws have proliferated madly; what was legal, or at least overlooked, 20 years ago could put a local official behind bars today. More important, she says, is the growing aggressiveness and