

POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

Lee found that what inhibits activist women in these communities from competing with men for political office has little to do with distaste for politics, lack of zeal, or reluctance to commit time and effort. Rather, the big factor was constraint imposed by child-rearing—a constraint felt by men as well as women. (Of women surveyed who had children at home, 5.3 percent had run for local public office, as against 26.1 percent with no children at home who had done so. For men it was 21.5 percent as against 38.9 percent.) Lee found women also shy away from seeking office because they see it as an inappropriate form of political activity (as distinct from helping others win election), because they feel others (both men and women) would disapprove, and because they fear sex discrimination (74.7 percent predicted they would not be accepted by men). Lee sees some signs of change: Not only do Louis Harris polls show women no longer opposing efforts to advance women's rights, but there has been a sharp increase in women candidates for Congress, from 26 in 1970 to 34 in 1972 and 46 in 1974.

A New Look at Eisenhower

"Eisenhower Revisionism" by Vincent P. De Santis, in *The Review of Politics* (Apr. 1976), University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Ind. 46556.

Dwight Eisenhower, as President, was a mediocrity, a political innocent who avoided decisions, delegated too much authority to subordinates, and devoted his energies to the golf course. For two decades, this was the conventional wisdom among academics and newsmen analyzing the Eisenhower years. Columnist William V. Shannon, for example, wrote (in 1958) that "the Eisenhower era is the time of the great postponement." In a 1962 poll of scholars ranking the Presidents, historian Arthur M. Schlesinger put Eisenhower at the bottom of the "average" category, between Andrew Johnson and Chester A. Arthur.

But during the '70s, many commentators—some of them, like I.F. Stone, writing from a Left perspective—have found things to admire. Why? Notre Dame historian De Santis observes that "the most important single thing about Eisenhower was that we did not go to war while he was President." Ike ended the Korean War in six months and reduced military spending. This "rehabilitation" of Eisenhower is also uncovering new character strengths. Garry Wills has described him as "a political genius." Author Richard Rhodes calls him "a brilliant man" with a "phenomenal memory." Other revisionist studies show him keeping a tight rein on Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, and withholding public condemnation of Senator Joseph McCarthy because he sincerely believed it would damage the dignity of the presidential office. The author concludes that the Eisenhower presidency "will always be associated with prosperity, abundance, and peace, no mean accomplishment."