Presidential Lightning Rods
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CHAPTER 1. THE LORE OF LIGHTNING RODS


4. “Advice to Sir George Villiers, afterwards Duke of Buckingham, when he became favourite to King James,” in The Works of Francis Bacon, 3 vols. (Philadelphia: A. Hart, 1853), 2:375–88, quotation at 375. Barry Goldwater reports that among the Hopi Indians it was “custom that the chief rarely if ever spoke publicly on important matters. A promising young brave always did so. If anything went wrong, it was the brave’s fault. If things went right, the chief was praised” (Barry M. Goldwater with Jack Casserly, Goldwater [New York: Doubleday, 1988], 270).


12. Compare, for instance, Patrick Anderson’s judgment that Harry Hopkins had been “used as a political lightning rod to draw criticism away from the President” (President’s Men, 4) with Robert Sherwood’s claim that Hopkins “was unquestionably a political liability to Roosevelt, a convenient target for all manner of attacks directed at the President himself” (Roosevelt and Hopkins: An Intimate History [New York: Harper and Brothers, 1948], 1). Or contrast Rosalynn Carter’s judgment that Carter needed to fire Joseph Califano because, “Joe was hurting him [Carter] politically” (First Lady from Plains [Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984], 155) with Fred Greenstein’s judgment that the firing of Califano was a mistake because Califano was “a public figure with a sufficiently independent reputation and personal disposition to be effective as a deflector” (Hidden-Hand Presidency, 238).

13. The most sustained treatment of the subject that I am aware of is Fred Greenstein’s Hidden-Hand Presidency, esp. 90–92, 147, 179, 238–40. Two other books that are well attuned to the adviser’s role in deflecting blame are Patrick Anderson, President’s Men, and Joseph G. Bock, The White House Staff and the National Security Assistant: Friendship and Friction at the Water’s Edge (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1987).


31. Anderson, *President's Men*, 348. Of Bill Moyers, George Reedy said: "What Bill did was pin responsibility upon the President in private conversations with the press. . . . It was no accident that the President's popularity started to fall abruptly as soon as Bill took over" (Larry Berman, "Johnson and the White House Staff," in Robert A. Divine, *Exploring the Johnson Years* [Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981], 193).


35. Larry Speakes, *Speaking Out: The Reagan Presidency from inside the White House* (New York: Scribners, 1988), 85. Also confusing is Hedrick Smith's suggestion that Don Regan had to quit because he "was becoming too much of a lightning rod" (address to the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco, July 8, 1988). If the term lightning rod denotes deflection of criticism (and this definition is consistent with Smith's usage of the term in his splendid book, *The Power Game* [New York: Random House, 1988]), then it is difficult to see how, at least from the president's point of view, an adviser can become "too much" of a lightning rod. An adviser may, of course, become so controversial that rather than deflect criticism (i.e., act as a lightning rod) he draws criticism to the president (i.e., becomes a liability).


42. Fenno, *President's Cabinet*, 165.

43. Ibid., 165–67.

44. The distinction between the "inner cabinet" (State, Defense, Treasury, and Justice) and the "outer cabinet" is from Thomas E. Cronin, *The State of the Presidency*, 2d ed. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1980), 282 ff.

45. More precisely, the postmaster general averaged 260 mentions a year, the secretary of interior 137, the secretary of labor 104, the secretary of agriculture 95, and the commerce secretary 93.

46. Averaging Benson's numbers over the duration of Eisenhower's presidency would not affect the results much. I have not calculated such an average, however, because after 1950, the *Times* changed the way it indexed names, making it necessary to cross-reference in order to obtain data about front-page references or even to obtain total mentions that are comparable with the earlier data.

47. I have excluded defense secretary designate John Tower from the list of administration officials. Tower had 143 mentions in 1989, almost all the result of his contentious confirmation hearing. Coverage of Sam Nunn, who was chair of the Armed Services Committee, was substantially increased by the Tower confirmation. The coverage of Jim Wright and John Glenn was greatly inflated as a result of ethics investigations directed at them.


50. Ibid., 64.

CHAPTER 2. IKE'S LIGHTNING ROD


3. Ibid., esp. 90–92, 147, 238–39.

4. Ibid., 91–92.


7. Greenstein, *Hidden-Hand Presidency*, 91. Krock's memoirs, it needs to be mentioned, were not published until eight years after Eisenhower left the presidency, but there are plenty of reasons to think that this was not something that occurred to Eisenhower only after watching Johnson's failure.

8. No evidence exists that Eisenhower selected his secretary of agriculture (or any other controversial cabinet member) for the purpose of being a lightning rod (Greenstein comes to the same conclusion in *Hidden-Hand Presidency*, 91). Rather, Benson seems to have been chosen in large part because he had widespread support within the farming community, particularly from the powerful Farm Bureau (see, e.g., Richard F. Fenno, Jr., *The President's Cabinet* [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1959], 51-87; Jeffrey E. Cohen, *The Politics of the U.S. Cabinet: Representation in the Executive Branch, 1789-1984* [Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1988]; Edward L. Schapsmeier and Frederick H. Schapsmeier, *Ezra Taft Benson and the Politics of Agriculture* [Danville, Ill.: Interstate, 1975], 13-14, 35-36; and George Aiken, Oral History-28, April 27, 1967, COHP, EL, 12. In addition, the administration saw the appointment of Benson, who had backed Taft in 1952, as an opportunity to unite the Republican party (Herbert Brownell, Oral History-282, April 7, 1971, COHP, EL, 14). Eisenhower also definitely wanted someone who shared his view that government control over agriculture needed to be reduced (see Herbert Brownell, Oral History-157, January 31, 1968, COHP, EL, 108; Ezra Taft Benson, *Cross Fire: The Eight Years with Eisenhower* [Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1962], 11; and Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Mandate for Change* [Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1963], 90).


14. Adams, *Firsthand Report*, 202. Eisenhower was certainly well aware that in a context of declining farm prices, policies aimed at reducing price supports were bound to draw fire from aggrieved interests. In a meeting with legislative leaders held at the outset of his second term, for instance, Eisenhower acknowledged that in the agricultural area “any change will be criticized” (Legislative Leadership Meeting, April 16, 1957, Legislative Meeting Series (Official File, Eisenhower Library, hereafter cited as OF, EL). “None of us was blind to the fact,” Eisenhower later wrote,
"that in attempting to liberate agriculture from the artificial system of marketing in vogue since World War II, we were undertaking an effort that would call forth angry protests from vote-seeking politicians and from certain sectors of the agricultural community" (Mandate for Change, 290). A number of prominent Republicans shared the view that criticism of the secretary of agriculture was inevitable given the farm situation and the administration's policies. See, for example, Adams, Firsthand Report, 203; Meade Alcorn, Oral History-163, February 8, 1967, COHP, EL, 128, 130; Edward Thye, Congressional Record, August 4, 1954, 13247.

15. American Institute of Public Opinion-593, January 3–7, 1958. The questions asked by Gallup were, Do you approve or disapprove of the way Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson is handling his job? and Do you approve or disapprove of the way Eisenhower is handling his job as President? Essentially the same results showed up in an earlier Gallup poll, taken in March 1956. The March poll found that 60 percent of farmers approved of Eisenhower's job performance while only 25 percent approved of Benson's; 36 percent of farmers combined disapproval of Benson with approval of Eisenhower (AIPO-561, March 8–13, 1956).

16. The exact wording of the questions were, On the whole, do you think President Eisenhower is doing a good, fair, or poor job for the nation at Washington? and On the whole, do you think that Ezra Taft Benson is doing a good, fair, or poor job as secretary of agriculture?

22. The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion, 1935–1971, 3 vols. (New York: Random House, 1972), 2:1421. This poll, the data for which have evidently been lost, was conducted at some point between April 16 (the day of the president's veto) and May 13 (the date of the press release).
23. Parmet, Eisenhower and the American Crusades, 322.
24. All of the data in this section were kindly provided to me by the Miller Publishing Center in Minneapolis.
26. A July 1985 poll showed a slightly larger discrepancy, with 65 percent disapproving of Block and 54 percent disapproving of Reagan. This is still a tightly coupled set of attitudes, however, when compared with the Eisenhower-Benson pattern.
28. This average is computed from six polls conducted twice a year (January and July) between 1978 and 1980.
29. In both the Illinois and Indiana samples, the questions were asked twice a year, once in the early spring and once in early fall. I have omitted the polls conducted in March 1977, because of its proximity to the beginning of the term.

30. More specifically, in May 1975, 26 percent disapproved of Butz and 24 percent disapproved of Ford. In December 1975, 25 percent disapproved of Butz and 28 percent disapproved of Ford. In June 1976, 26 percent expressed disapproval of Butz, while 30 percent expressed disapproval of Ford, and in September of that year, 32 percent disapproved of Butz and 32 percent disapproved of Ford.

31. There were, of course, exceptions. North Carolina Democrat Kerr Scott, for instance, professed to being “one member of this body who from the beginning of this administration has placed the responsibility for its sorry record on one man, and that one man is Dwight Eisenhower” (Congressional Record, April 24, 1956, 6848). In general, it was the most liberal senators, such as Wayne Morse (January 26, 1954, 806-9; March 12, 1954, 3201-2), Paul Douglas (January 27, 1956, 1453), and beginning in 1956 Hubert Humphrey (March 1, 1956, 3687), who attacked Eisenhower directly. By the same token, there were conservative Republicans who forthrightly defended Benson, such as Arthur Watkins of Utah (January 30, 1956, 1527-28) and Everett Dirksen of Illinois (January 30, 1956, 1527; February 1, 1956, 1779; February 21, 1957, 2383).

32. Ibid., April 16, 1958, 6483.
34. Ibid., February 19, 1954, 2041.
35. Ibid., January 29, 1957, 1060.
36. Ibid., January 27, 1956, 1460.
37. Ibid., April 4, 1957, 5151.
40. Ibid., January 30, 1956, 1539.
41. Ibid., March 31, 1958, 5761. Also see August 7, 1958, 16512.
42. Ibid., March 31, 1958, 5762.

43. Beginning early in the election year of 1956, Humphrey changed his tune, attacking both Benson and Eisenhower. He took special pains, for the first time, to identify the administration's program as "the Eisenhower-Benson farm program" (see, for example, ibid., March 6, 1956, 4025-52; also see March 1, 1956, 3696 and April 18, 1956, 6489). To press the point home, he told his Senate colleagues: "I have stated on the floor at times that I thought the Secretary of Agriculture ought to be dismissed, but I think that was an unkind remark. I do not believe it would make a bit of difference if he were dismissed. He is carrying out the policy of the administration from right up at the top" (March 1, 1956, 3687).

44. Ibid., March 22, 1954, 3654; March 4, 1954, 2642. Commenting on a Wall Street Journal report that Eisenhower had decided to veto any extension of present levels of farm price supports, Humphrey believed that if the president "will consult his own conscience" rather than following Benson's advice, there would almost certainly be no veto (June 16, 1954, 8355).


50. Adams, Firsthand Report, 82.

51. Eisenhower, Mandate for Change, 290; also see 562–63. Sherman Adams observed that "the so-called Benson farm policies that everybody indignantly called to Eisenhower's attention were actually Eisenhower's own farm policies" (Firsthand Report, 203). Also see Ambrose, Eisenhower, 159–60; William E. Leuchtenburg, In the Shadow of FDR: From Harry Truman to Ronald Reagan (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1983), 53–56; Schapsmeier and Schapsmeier, "Eisenhower and Ezra Taft Benson," 369, 378; and Parmet, Eisenhower and the Crusades, 321.

52. Notes of meeting with secretary of agriculture, October 29, 1955, Box 6, Administration Series, Ann Whitman File (hereafter cited as AWF), EL. Also present at the meeting were Milton Eisenhower, Sherman Adams, and Jim Hagerty.

53. The Soil Bank included a temporary "Acreage Reserve" program, through which farmers were paid to take soil out of production, and a more long-term "Conservation Reserve" program, through which farmers would receive federal money for shifting their land into forage, trees, or even reservoirs.


56. Young, Oral History-248, 8, 9, 18, 19.

57. Benson, Cross Fire, 394.


63. Ibid., 72–73, 189. Stewart L. Udall, interior secretary under John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson, points out that "visible, or apparent, Presidential support is vital to [a cabinet member's] authority and credibility; without it he cannot be a successful administrator or a national leader of power and prestige" ("Lame-Duck Cabinet," New York Times, December 28, 1972, A31).


65. Benson, Cross Fire, 164. Benson to Eisenhower, January 5, 1954, Administration Series, AWF, EL.

66. New York Times, January 12, 1954, 8. Following the press conference, Benson participated in a half-hour television interview in which he discussed the message, as well as making a radio broadcast later that evening. Benson later described the day the president's message was delivered to Congress as "one of the busiest times in my eight years" (Benson, Cross Fire, 170).


69. Early in his administration, Eisenhower signaled his reluctance to be drawn into the farm-policy debate. At a press conference in early April 1953, he was asked what he would do to deal with the problem of butter being stockpiled and spoiling and replied, "Well, of course, you are talking about something where you could far better go to the Secretary of Agriculture and get a really definitive answer to such a question" (News Conference, April 2, 1953, *Public Papers*, 155).

70. Benson, *Cross Fire*, 195. Also see 191.


72. As George Bush found out. One of the fundamental contradictions of the Bush presidency was that the frequent recourse to the veto undermined his efforts at blame avoidance.


75. *Congressional Record*, April 16, 1956, 6322.

76. Ibid., April 16, 1956, 1638.

77. Ibid., April 18, 1956, 6489. In truth, Humphrey had publicly come to this conclusion a month earlier: "For a time I thought it was all Mr. Benson's idea, but I do not think it is. I think we have been unfair to the Secretary. He is carrying out orders from some place in the White House. I am not sure where they originate. I would assume he is carrying out President Eisenhower's orders. Possibly they are orders from Sherman Adams. But someone is giving orders" (ibid., March 1, 1956, 3687).

78. Ibid., April 18, 1956, 6511–13.


81. Eisenhower had anticipated that a veto would leave him vulnerable to criticism. A month before the legislation passed, Eisenhower told aides that "the Democrats are going to . . . write a bill that has something for everybody and if I then veto it, a lot of people will be mad" (Ambrose, *Eisenhower*, 300).

82. Ambrose, *Eisenhower*, 461. Jack Z. Anderson, a White House staff member and former aide to Benson, recalls the president calling Benson into his office to express his extreme displeasure at having to veto this bill. Eisenhower lectured Benson: "You've backed me into a corner. As a military man, I don't like this. Sometimes you have to lose a battle to win a war. . . . I guess I'm going to veto the bill as you've indicated you want done, but I'm in a horrible predicament" (Oral History-321, February 2, 1971, COHP, EL, 57).

83. Ezra Taft Benson to Eisenhower, March 18, 1958, Administration Series, AWF, EL.


85. Meade Alcorn, then Republican party chair, recalls a meeting in which the president "cut Ezra Benson . . . cold out of the discussion. . . . He said, 'Now, look, Ezra this man over here is the National Chairman, and the reason he is National Chairman is because he's supposed to know something about politics. You're supposed to know something about agriculture. Now, you stick with the agriculture but you leave the politics to him' " (Alcorn, Oral History-163, 35).
86. President Eisenhower to Benson, November 15, 1958, Administration Series, AWF, EL.
88. Minnich minutes of meeting with legislative leaders, June 21, 1954, DDE Diary Series, AWF, EL.
89. Eisenhower to Hazlett, March 18, 1954, in Robert Griffith, ed., *Ike's Letters to a Friend, 1941–1958* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1984), 121. Typically, he added that "I want to stress, too, that there is no man in government more dedicated and devoted, and more selfless and sincere, than is Ezra Benson."
90. August Andresen to Eisenhower, February 27, 1954, Administration Series, AWF, EL.
95. Chapter 7, a case study focusing on Eisenhower's relations with Attorney General Herbert Brownell, explores in greater depth the control over the direction of policy that a president forfeits in delegating to a subordinate.
96. Barry Goldwater, for instance, recalled that Eisenhower "was violently opposed to federal regulation of farming, prices, acreage and so forth" (Oral History-21, June 15, 1967, COHP, EL, 62).

CHAPTER 3. REAGAN'S LIABILITY

1. Mark Hertsgaard, *On Bended Knee: The Press and the Reagan Presidency* (New York: Farrar, 1988), 32. This view of the Carter presidency as oblivious to the problems of overexposure is exaggerated. After the Three Mile Island nuclear accident, for instance, Carter carefully avoided associating himself with events. As Jack Watson explained: "We didn't want to get the president out front and involved because we thought that the president's speaking about that and being personally involved in it would escalate the matter beyond where our knowledge would permit us to go. . . . So while we were keeping him informed internally at every turn of the day, he was not, either through a spokesman or otherwise, actively taking much of a role or saying much about it" (Samuel Kernell and Samuel L. Popkin, eds., *Chief of Staff: Twenty-Five Years of Managing the Presidency* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986], 36).
Social Security controversy was not particularly successful. A CBS/New York Times poll, conducted in September 1981, found that only 44 percent of the respondents said they could “trust the President to make the right decisions on social security” (press release, October 4, 1981). In contrast, six in ten trusted Reagan on military and budget issues.


9. Lou Cannon, President Reagan: The Role of a Lifetime (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1991), 191-92; also see 145, 160. Similarly, in the wake of charges that the White House was being run by a “palace guard” and that President Eisenhower was uninformed about important matters of state, Sherman Adams felt the need to defend Eisenhower publicly as the “best informed man in the country today” and “the policy maker” (New York Times, November 19, 1957, 26), a comment that produced such unflattering headlines as “Adams Insists Ike Is Really President” (New York Times, January 22, 1958, 16).

10. Lou Cannon writes, the “low opinion of Reagan [among those in Washington] deprived him of credit for some of his accomplishments but also spared him the blame for his shortcomings” (Role of a Lifetime, 13; also see 87).


15. Lou Cannon cautions that “while Reagan tried to stuff everything he heard or read into the view of the world he had brought with him to Washington, he appreciated the value of compromise and negotiation. . . . Reagan did not fit the neat ideological stereotype that was presented in alternative forms by movement conservatives and liberal activists. . . . On nearly all issues, Reagan was simultaneously an ideologue and a pragmatist. He complained to aides that true believers on the Republican
right such as Senator Jesse Helms preferred to ‘go off the cliff with all flags flying’ rather than take half a loaf and come back for more.” Cannon speculates that Reagan’s intense desire to win tended to “prevail even at the expense of his program [and] served as a check on ideology” (Cannon, Role of a Lifetime, 185–86).

Fred Greenstein reaches a similar conclusion, though by a somewhat different route: “Reagan is less than the compleat ideologue in two senses. In an Eric Hoffer world of ‘true believers’—individuals who rely on detailed elaborations of doctrine to guide their day-to-day actions and even to lend meaning to their lives—Reagan is a tame specimen. His beliefs are important to him, but so are his wife, his family, his friends, his avocations, and much else that keeps him from being a Savonarola descended upon Washington to purge it of evil” (Greenstein, “Reagan and the Lore,” 171). Also see James David Barber, Presidential Character, 4th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1992), 236–38.


17. Martin Anderson was struck by the fact that as an executive, Reagan “made no demands, and gave almost no instructions” (Revolution [New York: Harcourt, 1988], 289). Also see Don Regan, For the Record, 142–43.


19. In foreign policy, writes Lou Cannon, Reagan “had impulses . . . rather than policies” (Role of a Lifetime, 182). According to Cannon, Don Regan believed Reagan “was fundamentally a centrist and therefore gave a different meaning to ‘let Reagan be Reagan’” (ibid., 565).


23. The argument I am making in this chapter runs up against one of the most persistent myths about Reagan, namely that his popular appeal was exceptional in the way that it transcended party lines. According to David Gergen, for instance, Reagan had become “a father figure . . . [who] transcends the party” (Mayer and McManus, Landslide, 13). But this view of Reagan cannot bear careful scrutiny. Reagan’s average approval rating among Democrats was 30 percent, which is the lowest Democratic support score among all Republican presidents for whom Gallup has kept records. Reagan’s average Democratic support score was marginally below that registered by Nixon (34 percent) and Ford (36 percent) and well shy of Bush’s 46 percent and Eisenhower’s 49 percent approval ratings among Democrats. In fact, Reagan did no better with Democrats than Carter (31 percent) had done with Republicans, and much worse than Johnson (39 percent) and Kennedy (49 percent). And in 1982 and the first ten months of 1983, while Watt was in office, Reagan’s support among Democrats averaged about 23 percent. Only Nixon in his final year, mired in
Watergate, received less support from the opposite party (see George C. Edwards with Alec Gallup, *Presidential Approval* [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990], 119). Moreover, the gap between the support given the president by adherents of the two parties was higher during the Reagan presidency than at any other time during the last forty years. From Eisenhower to Carter the average difference in approval between Democrats and Republicans was roughly 35 percentage points, ranging from Carter’s 26 percent to Nixon’s 40 percent. For Bush the gap between Democratic and Republican approval was 37 percent. During Reagan’s tenure, however, that gap ballooned to 53 percentage points. This and other evidence debunking the myth of Reagan as a “Teflon-coated” president can be found in Edwards, *Presidential Approval*, esp. 156, 179. The data for Bush were generously provided to me by George Edwards. The precise numbers for Bush may be off a percentage point or two due to a few missing polls, but this is inconsequential for the point being made here.


29. There were, of course, exceptions. From the outset, John B. Oakes, former senior editor of the *New York Times*, aimed his criticism directly at Reagan. By nominating “the anti-environmental extremist James G. Watt,” Oakes complained, “Ronald Reagan has demonstrated his contempt for the office itself, for the needs of the country, and for the advice of the most respected environmentalists of his own

30. Excerpts from the address were reprinted in Sierra, July/August, 1981, 6+; and Not Man Apart, July 1981, 11.


34. Ibid., March 29, 1981, 32.


38. Sierra Club President Phillip Berry suggests, I think accurately, that environmental groups' initial hesitancy to directly attack Reagan was due primarily to the president's popularity and not to a sense that Reagan was an environmentalist at heart. Also at work, Berry explains, was a “desire to give the administration a way ‘out’ if they chose to take it” as well as the knowledge that “you cannot easily change presidents” but “it is relatively easy to change [an] interior secretary” (Personal correspondence with author, August 2, 1991). As these comments make clear, the lightning rod phenomenon is as much if not more a product of the strategic calculations of critics as of presidents.

39. Not Man Apart, October 1981, 25. The same sentiments were expressed in a letter to the Los Angeles Times, August 29, 1981, II:2. Expressing amazement “that President Reagan has so successfully been able to escape criticism for what is in reality Reagan’s own ridiculous environmental policy,” the letter pointed out that Watt was appointed by Reagan “because he shares Reagan’s pro-exploitation view of the environment and because Reagan was convinced he could forcefully advocate and enforce these views.” “We in California,” he reminded his audience, “should remember, Reagan has always been an anti-environmentalist.” The letter concluded that “it is time for people who are disappointed or outraged at James Watt to pin the blame on the boss, Ronald Reagan.” Also see John B. Oakes, “The Reagan Hoax,” New York Times, November 1, 1981, IV:21.


42. Not Man Apart, June 1982, 2.

43. Joe Fontaine, Sierra Club president, quoted in Doug Scott, “Reagan’s First Year: ‘We Know Watt’s Wrong,”’ Sierra, January/February, 1982, 30.

44. The other groups were the Natural Resources Defense Council, the Environmental Defense Fund, the Environmental Policy Center, Environmental Action, Defenders of Wildlife, and the Solar Lobby.


48. See, for example, the editorial in the Los Angeles Times, which not only blasted “the Reagan Administration . . . [for] sacrificing economics to ideology . . . [in] a fire sale . . . that will burn Americans for generations to come,” but stressed


58. The shift among environmentalists from attacking Watt to attacking Reagan must be understood, in part, as a strategic reaction to Reagan’s declining popularity caused by the economic downturn. During the spring of 1981, in the aftermath of the assassination attempt, Reagan had approval ratings that were better than three to one, making it costly to directly criticize Reagan. By the following spring, however, with as many people disapproving as approving of Reagan, it had become far less risky for environmental groups to directly attack Reagan. As his job rating continued to slide over the next year, criticism of the president became increasingly painless. But this is only a partial explanation, for it neglects the role that Reagan’s behavior played in making it untenable for opponents to believe that Watt was diverging from Reagan’s preferred policies.


Sierra Club official Doug Scott commented that the administration's anti-environmental image was "reinforced by the words and actions of virtually every . . . prominent environmental appointee of the Reagan administration so far" ("Reagan's First Year," Sierra, January/February, 1982, 128).

62. The lack of access environmental groups had to the Reagan White House is documented in a recent study of interest-group access during the Carter and Reagan presidencies. See John Orman, "The President and Interest Group Access," Presidential Studies Quarterly 18 (Fall 1988): 787–92.


66. Michael E. Kraft, "A New Environmental Policy Agenda: The 1980 Presidential Campaign and its Aftermath," in Vig and Kraft, eds., Environmental Policy in the 1980s, 35, 42. Lou Cannon comments that "Reagan compiled an environmental record as governor of California that was better than his comments during the campaign would have led anyone to believe" (Role of a Lifetime, 530).


69. Ibid., March 12, 1983, 8. At this press conference, Reagan also expressed the view that "environmental extremists" wouldn't "be happy until the White House looks like a bird's nest." Also see ibid., March 7, 1983, II:6.

70. Ibid., March 30, 1983, 14.


75. See sources cited in note 24.

76. Greenstein, Hidden-Hand Presidency, 239. Russell Peterson, for instance, observed: "By his own admission a 'lightning rod' for the President's least popular environmental policies, the Interior Secretary was doing exactly what he had been hired to do" ("Laissez-Faire Landscape," New York Times Magazine, October 31, 1982, 27+).

77. "If there hadn't been a James Watt," confided Doug Scott, director of federal affairs for the Sierra Club, "we would have had to invent one" (Cannon, Reagan, 363).

78. Cannon, Role of a Lifetime, 532.

80. Ibid., 158, 161. Similarly, Philip B. Heymann has noted that Anne Gorsuch Burford's "forced departure was as attributable to the way she handled her unpopular assignment as it was to what she did" (The Politics of Public Management [New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1987], 43). Much of what Heymann writes about Burford applies with equal or greater force to Watt. Reagan asked for Watt's resignation for the same reason he asked for Burford's resignation: "Not because she was ignoring his policies but because she failed to consider the policies and powers of others as well" (ibid., 7).


88. In the summer of 1982, George Will correctly foresaw the danger "that Watt will discredit economic analysis by seeming sympathetic only to economic considerations" ("A Word for the Wilderness," Newsweek, August 16, 1982, 68).


90. Portney, "Natural Resources and the Environment," 162.


93. Kraft and Vig point to the "greater emphasis [in the EPA] to pollution prevention, source reduction, and recycling efforts," to the greater attention within the Department of Energy toward "environmental and public health issues in its management of nuclear facilities," as well as to "substantial new funds for EPA and Justice Department enforcement actions; cleanup activity at federal facilities (especially DOE weapons plants); acceleration of Superfund cleanup actions; research, protection, and enhancement of wetlands; demonstration projects to terminate 'below cost' timber sales in national forests; research on global climate change; and the
'America the Beautiful' initiative, which includes new funds for expanded land acquisition for national parks, wildlife refuges, forests and other public lands." In addition, "Bush backed an EPA-ordered phase out of asbestos use by 1997, and supported an EPA ruling that blocked issuance of a permit to construct the Two Forks Dam in Colorado" ("Presidential Styles and Substance," 25–26).

94. Kraft and Vig, "Presidential Styles and Substance," 45, 25. This perhaps explains why, when the president eventually signed the clean air bill into law on November 15, 1990, he largely left congressmen on the sidelines and tried to have his administration take all of the credit for the outcome (Richard E. Cohen, Washington at Work: Back Rooms and Clean Air [New York: Macmillan, 1992], 169).


97. Gallup asked the question, "Do you approve or disapprove of the way George Bush is handling the issue of the environment?" on six occasions during Bush's presidency. In November 1989, 46 percent approved and 40 percent disapproved; in July 1990, 42 percent approved, 46 percent disapproved; in October 1990, shortly before Bush signed the Clean Air Act, 45 percent approved, 45 percent disapproved; in March 1991, 53 percent approved, 38 percent disapproved; in January 1992, 49 percent approved, 41 percent disapproved; and in June 1992, 29 percent approved, 58 percent disapproved. See Lydia Saad, "Bush Stance on Environment Unpopular," Gallup Poll Monthly, June 1992, 25.

98. Kraft and Vig, "Presidential Styles and Substance," 46–47. Even the way in which these questions were asked reflects the elites' framing of the Bush record as a disconnect between what Bush said and what Bush did. Interestingly, Kraft and Vig, though critical of many parts of the Bush environmental record, found that "Bush's budgets indicate a continuing effort to live up to his campaign promises on the environment" (Kraft and Vig, "Presidential Styles and Substance," 25).


100. Kraft and Vig, "Presidential Styles and Substance," 46.

101. Bush, for instance, reached out to the black community in a way that Reagan never did. He began his first weeks in office by giving a well-received speech honoring Martin Luther King. He met with Coretta King, who later described the session as "very warm and cordial." "We don't disagree on goals," King's widow said. "The goals that he seems to want for his administration are very similar to the goals that I would like to see" (San Francisco Chronicle, December 14, 1988, 20). Bush met also with Desmond Tutu, who afterward praised Bush's "warm openness" to the anti-apartheid cause, comments that differed strikingly from those Tutu made after meeting in 1984 with President Reagan. Tutu called Reagan a "racist pure and simple" after he vetoed a sanctions bill (San Francisco Chronicle, May 19, 1989, 30). Bush invited every member of the Congressional Black Caucus to the White House in March 1989, and the dozen who came got a complete White House tour. In April 1990, Bush's approval rating among blacks reached 56 percent, the highest for a Republican since Dwight Eisenhower. A headline in a May 1990 issue of the New Republic blared "Why Blacks Love Bush."


104. McLaughlin Group, April 21, 1989.
105. Kraft and Vig, "Presidential Styles and Substance," 19. "Most of Bush's natural resources appointments, on the other hand, were much like Reagan's: sympathetic to development interests and possessing few environmental credentials" (ibid., 19-20).
106. Maureen Dowd, "Who's Environmental Czar, E.P.A.'s Chief or Sununu?" New York Times, February 15, 1990, B16. Not everyone within the Bush administration viewed Reilly's efforts in the same positive light. The conservative view, expressed through Fred Barnes's column, was that Reilly "gets too much credit, Bush too little. Bush really wants to be known as the 'environmental President.' Instead he's known as the President with an ardent environmentalist at the EPA. That's not the same" ("Green Thumb," New Republic, January 1, 1990, 11).
108. Others who occasionally served as environmental lightning rods were OMB director Richard Darman, who publicly denounced the "radical, anti-growth green perspective" (Kraft and Vig, "Presidential Styles and Substance," 21), and Dan Quayle who, as head of the Competitiveness Council, called for relaxing many environmental regulations.
109. Philip Shabecoff, "Bush Gets Pleas over Environment: President's Policies Undercut by Sununu, 8 Groups Say," New York Times, February 22, 1990, A20. So intense was the criticism of Sununu that the administration felt it necessary to send out presidential spokesman Marlin Fitzwater to play down Sununu's role. Fitzwater insisted that Bush's decisions "represent his point of view and priorities." Sununu simply prepares options and "insures that all points of view are heard."
113. A Gallup poll of four hundred climate, atmospheric, and oceanographic scientists found that only one in five attributes increasing global temperatures to human activities rather than natural fluctuations. Ninety percent of the experts described the study of global change as an "emerging science" rather than a "mature science," and only 6 percent said the scientific community understands global climate change "very well." Forty-five percent said "fairly well," 41 percent said "not too well," and 6 percent said "not well at all." The Center for Media and Public Affairs, in a study of media coverage of the scientific and political debate over global warming from January 1985 through January 1992, found that the scientific experts quoted in the media were significantly less skeptical of the greenhouse effect than were the scientific experts polled by Gallup (Media Monitor, December 1992).
114. These ideas are developed in Michael Thompson, Richard Ellis, and Aaron Wildavsky, Cultural Theory (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1990), esp. chap. 1.
116. Ibid., 44.
117. For instance, George Frampton, president of the Wilderness Society, told re-

120. Hoffman, "George Bush Has His Own Environmental Problems," 12.
123. Ibid., 49. Grady, it should be pointed out, was no Darman-like foe of environmentalism. Indeed Grady served as Bush's environmental speech writer during the 1988 campaign, and his appointment as associate director of OMB for natural resources, energy, and science was well received by the environmental community (ibid., 19).
125. Bush and his administration were far from the only targets of environmental ire. During the debate over the Clean Air Act of 1990, a frustrated George Mitchell, the Democratic Senate majority leader, complained to reporters that the environmentalists "were not helpful in this process. . . . They spent most of their time attacking their friends" (Cohen, *Washington at Work*, 101).
127. The extent of this polarization is suggested by a study of 1984 national convention delegates, which found that 73 percent of Democrats favored tightening environmental regulations and only 14 percent favored relaxing those regulations, while among Republican elites, in contrast, 65 percent favored relaxing environmental regulations and 16 percent favored tightening environmental regulations (Nelson W. Polsby and Aaron Wildavsky, *Presidential Elections: Contemporary Strategies of American Electoral Politics*, 8th ed. [New York: Free Press, 1991], 148).
128. Ann Devroy, "Environmental Presidential Politics: Bush is in the Middle of the Clean Air Fight," *Washington Post National Weekly Edition*, May 4–10, 1992, 14. The earlier debate within the administration over offshore oil drilling presented a similar problem for Bush. As one Bush adviser explained, "This has been a split-the-difference presidency, and on some issues you can't split the difference" (Hoffman, "George Bush Has His Own Environmental Problems," 12). Also see Philip Shabecoff, "In Thicket of Environmental Policy, Bush Uses Balance as His Compass," *New York Times*, July 1, 1990, 120.
131. *New York Times*, July 11, 1990, A18, emphasis added. As Bert Rockman points out, "If the kinder, gentler line gave Bush partisans some pause, it also gave Democrats a hook to criticize Bush for not supporting their preferred programs" ("The Leadership Style of George Bush," 7).
132. In Kasson, Minnesota, on September 6, 1952, Eisenhower promised "here, and now, without any ifs or buts, I say to you that I stand behind . . . the price sup-
port laws now on the books. This includes the amendment to the Basic Farm Act . . .
to continue through 1954 the price supports on basic commodities at 90 percent of
parity . . . I firmly believe that agriculture is entitled to a fair, full share of the
national income and it must be a policy of Government to help agriculture achieve this
goal in ways that minimize Government control and protect the farmers' indepen-
dence; and a fair share is not merely 90 percent of parity—it is full parity."

133. Minnesota Senator Hubert Humphrey, for instance, accused Benson of "be-
traying both his constituency and his boss." (Congressional Record, June 16, 1954,
8353). Also see the comments by Senators Eastland (February 13, 1953, 1047), Ful-
bright (February 18, 1953, 1175–79), Kefauver (March 25, 1954, 3829, 3831), and
Humphrey (March 4, 1954, 2642; June 16, 1954, 8353–55). Also see Milton Young,


CHAPTER 4. THE VICE PRESIDENT AS LIGHTNING
ROD

1. Most notably, the fine study by Paul C. Light, Vice-Presidential Power: Advice
and Influence in the White House (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press,
1984). Also see Michael Turner, The Vice President as Policy Maker: Rockefeller in
the Ford White House (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1982); Joel K. Gold-
stein, The Modern American Vice Presidency: The Transformation of a Political In-
titution (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1982); and Marie D. Natoli,
American Prince, American Pauper: The Contemporary Vice Presidency in Perspec-

2. Light, Vice-Presidential Power, 60. Light usefully distinguishes between the
political vice-presidency and the policy vice-presidency.


Studies Quarterly 12 (Fall 1982): 606.

5. Albert Eisele, Almost to the Presidency: A Biography of Two American Politici-
ans (Blue Earth, Minn.: Piper, 1972), 335.


8. Norma Krause Herzfield, "H.H.H.: Vote-getter or Scapegoat?" Common-
weal, August 11, 1967, 492.

9. AIPO-560, February 16–21, 1956. In both the February 1956 and December
1966 survey, respondents were asked to rate the vice president immediately after hav-
ing evaluated the president. Subsequent surveys conducted during the 1956 cam-
paign, one shortly before the Republican convention and the other immediately pre-
ceding the general election, indicate that evaluations of Nixon and Eisenhower
became more closely joined as the election drew closer. Those who felt favorably to-
ward Eisenhower appeared to resolve the discrepancy in their attitude toward the Re-
publican ticket by upgrading their evaluation of Vice President Nixon. Still, even
these surveys demonstrate considerably less linkage than existed in the Johnson/
Humphrey relationship. The July survey, taken about the time Harold Stassen was
 vainly floating the idea of dumping Nixon in favor of Massachusetts Governor
Christian Herter, showed that 24 percent gave Eisenhower and Nixon the same rat-
ing, 39 percent placed them within a point of each other, and 54 percent put them
within two points (AIPO-567, July 12-17, 1956). The pre-election survey found only 23 percent gave the two men the same rating, 40 percent placed them within a point, and 57 percent placed them within two points (AIPO-573, October 18-23, 1956).

10. AIPO-761, May 2, 1968; AIPO-770, October 17-22, 1968. In both of these surveys, after rating Johnson the respondent was asked to evaluate two other public figures before being asked about Humphrey. The Eisenhower/Nixon questions, in contrast, were asked consecutively in the February and July surveys and were separated by only a single question in the October poll. Because the closer together the questions are asked the greater the likelihood that a respondent's answer will be similar, the question order may actually be attenuating some of the underlying differences between the Humphrey and Nixon cases. On the effects of question order, see Howard Schuman and Stanley Presser, *Questions and Answers in Attitude Surveys: Experimentation on Question Form, Wording, and Context* (New York: Academic Press, 1981), chap. 2.


12. Light, *Vice-Presidential Power*, 28. Humphrey's personal physician, Edgar Berman, reported that "it had always bothered Humphrey that he had to have all speeches cleared line by line" (*Hubert: The Triumph and Tragedy of the Humphrey I Knew* [New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1979], 93).


19. Solberg, *Humphrey*, 278. Also see Natoli, "Humphrey Vice Presidency," 605; and Humphrey, *Education*, 428. This aspect of the Humphrey/Johnson relationship was also widely reported in the contemporary press. For instance, the *Atlantic Monthly* reported that Johnson "was annoyed whenever Humphrey's name appeared in the newspapers" (June 1967, 8), and *Time* observed that "Johnson was nettled by the newspaper space that Humphrey garnered" (April 1, 1966, 23).

20. Humphrey, *Education*, 427; also see 367.


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25. About the same time, Humphrey was scheduled to address a United Nations conference on Pope John's Pacem in Terris encyclical. The speech was submitted to the White House, and, as Humphrey later lamented, all "the innovative, peace-seeking material" was cut out (Humphrey, Education, 324).


27. In July 1965, for instance, Humphrey wrote to Johnson telling him that "I have a roomful of senators over here at the Capitol, and we thought that the [announcement] was tremendous. I was personally inspired, moved, and I just couldn't be happier if they had Christmas every day and every dream I ever wanted came true" (Humphrey to Johnson, July 28, 1965, quoted in Solberg, Humphrey, 282; also see 303).


29. Ibid., 290. Even when Humphrey was staunchly defending the war effort, Johnson often found it difficult to allow Humphrey to occupy center stage. Upon Humphrey's return from his February trip every member of Congress was invited to the White House, and although the purpose was "nominally to hear Vice-President Humphrey report on his trip to the Far East, . . . it was the President who popped up to field the questions in his old-time bantering form" (Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, Lyndon B. Johnson: The Exercise of Power [New York: Signet, 1966], 596).


39. So, for instance, Robert Sherrill could write that Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach has "refused (on the President's orders, surely) to send more than a skeleton crew of registrars into the South" ("Cold Eye on Johnson," The Nation, January 3, 1966, 6).


42. Survey 550, July 14–19, 1955, *Gallup Poll*, 1355. The question read, “In your opinion, is Eisenhower, at heart, more of a Republican, more of a Democrat, or do you think he is somewhere in between the two?” Also see Samuel Lubell, *Revolt of the Moderates* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956), 24–25.


46. This division of labor created a dilemma for Nixon, whose own presidential ambitions also depended on attracting a significant block of Democrats. Consequently, Nixon’s lightning rod role became less pronounced during the second term. Eisenhower’s lightning rod strategy worked best when it coincided with Nixon’s own political interests of solidifying his leadership role within the Republican party and less well as Nixon’s attention turned toward winning a national election. For evidence that Nixon well understood this tension between his role as Eisenhower’s “political point-man” and his own presidential ambitions, see Richard M. Nixon, *The Memoirs of Richard Nixon* (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1978), 199.


51. Ambrose, *Nixon*, 337–38. Eisenhower originally drafted a letter to Nixon, in which he wrote: “I quite understand the impulse—particularly before a partisan au-
dience—to lash out at political opponents. But I am constantly working to produce a truly bipartisan approach, and I rather think that keeping up attacks against Acheson will, at this late date, hamper our efforts." Eisenhower then decided not to send the letter.

63. Lubell, Revolt of the Moderates, 27.
68. Time, January 23, 1956, 14. The same view was put forth a few months later when Time reported that "Nixon was... an attractive target for Democrats who did not want to waste their ammunition on Eisenhower" (March 26, 1956, 21).
71. Sixty-three percent gave Eisenhower a rating of between plus 3 and plus 5. AIPO-560, February 16-21, 1956.
75. This frank admission came in an informal talk with the journalist Merriman Smith in late 1957. Smith asked Eisenhower how he felt about the term "politician," adding that he had got the impression that Eisenhower "didn't like it and that he had never liked the role of politician." Eisenhower retorted, "What the hell are you talking about? How do you get to be Army Chief of Staff?... I've been in politics, the most active sort of politics, in the military most of my adult life. ... There's no more active political organization in the country or in the world than the armed services of the United States. As a matter of fact, I think I am a better politician than most so-called professionals" (Merriman Smith, Oral History-160, January 3, 1968, COHP, EL, 4).
77. News Conference, February 10, 1954, Public Papers of the Presidents: Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1953-1961, 8 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1960-1961), 246. Also see Henry Cabot Lodge, As It Was (New York: Norton, 1976), 144-45. Even when speaking before partisan audiences such as the Republican National Finance Committee, Eisenhower would sometimes use the occasion to warn against excessive partisanship. "Our greatest enemy," the president lectured, "is not the Democrats. We certainly can't have better allies when we are fighting anybody from abroad. So let's remember that, and as I talk, let's not build up a picture that the worst enemy anyone can have is a Democrat. Far from it. We just don't think they can do as good a job as we do" (Remarks at Luncheon Meeting of the Republican National Committee and the Republican National Finance Committee, February 17, 1955, Public Papers, 267).
78. See the public opinion polls reported in William C. Mitchell, "The Ambivalent Social Status of the American Politician," Western Political Quarterly 12 (Sep-


82. Although initially favorably disposed toward Stevenson, Eisenhower soon came to regard Stevenson as indecisive, flippant, and naive. Indeed, so great was Eisenhower's disdain for Stevenson that, according to Nixon, "after Eisenhower's stroke the doctors ordered us to steer clear of discussion of Stevenson because it always caused the President's blood pressure to rise alarmingly" (Nixon, _Memoirs_, 111; also see Hughes, _Ordeal of Power_, 171–72).

83. In a confidential memo to Secretary of Commerce Sinclair Weeks, for instance, the president worried that a revised Civil Service procedure would protect individuals who had reached their positions "through a process of selection based upon their devotion to the socialistic doctrine and bureaucratic controls practiced over the past two decades" (Eisenhower to Weeks, March 8, 1953, cited in Herbert S. Parmet, _Eisenhower and the American Crusades_ [New York: Macmillan, 1972], 209–10).


85. Parmet, _American Crusades_, 332.


88. Hughes, _Ordeal of Power_, 152. He confided to Hughes that his decision to run for reelection stemmed in part from an absence of "fresh, young, new leadership." Eisenhower sounded a similar note in a letter to Swede Hazlett explaining his decision to run again. The first reason he offered was his feeling that he had "failed to bring forward and establish a logical successor for myself. This failure was of course not intentional. To the contrary, I struggled hard to acquaint the public with the qualities of a very able group of young men . . . . The evidence becomes clear that I had not been able to get any individual to be recognized as a natural or logical candidate for the Presidency" (Robert Griffith, ed., _Ike's Letters to a Friend, 1941–1958_ [Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1984], 160 [March 2, 1956]).

89. President Eisenhower, observed William Ewald, "never wrote a list of possible running mates or successors without including Nixon's name . . . but Nixon was never at the top" (Ewald, _Eisenhower the President_, 177). In discussions with James Hagerty at the end of 1955 concerning possible successors, Eisenhower identified four people who he thought were "mentally qualified for the presidency": George Humphrey, Herbert Brownell, Sherman Adams, and Robert Anderson (Robert H. Ferrell, ed., _The Diary of James Hagerty: Eisenhower in Mid-Course, 1954–1955_ [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983], 245 [December 14, 1955]). Eisenhower's preference for Robert Anderson is noted in, among other places, Ewald, _Eisenhower the President_, 186; Hughes, _Ordeal of Power_, 217–18; and Ambrose, _Eisenhower_, 320. In his diary, Eisenhower confided his belief that his brother, Milton Eisenhower, "is at this moment the most highly qualified man in the United States to
be president” (May 14, 1953, Eisenhower Diaries, 238). Also see Ewald, Eisenhower the President, 189–90.

90. Ambrose, Nixon, 619.


92. Light, Vice-Presidential Power, 63.

93. Ibid., 255. Table 4.1 offers some support for Light’s proposition in so far as Mondale and Bush, both of whom gained unprecedented access to the administration’s inner councils, were markedly less newsworthy than their immediate predecessors.

94. Ibid., 255; also see 50.

95. Ibid., 256. “Of all the programs that the Carter administration produced,” Light observes, “only the Vietnamese boat people rescue can be identified as a pure Mondale idea” (ibid., 50).

96. On Bush’s role as vice president, see ibid., 260–68; and Pika, “Bush, Quayle, and the New Vice Presidency,” 511–16.


101. Shortly after Bush’s election, conservative activist and fund-raiser Richard Viguerie was asked whether he took any comfort in the fact that Quayle, a conservative, was vice president. Viguerie responded, “No one that I’m aware of believes that Dan Quayle is making policy” (New York Times, January 31, 1989, A16).

102. Light, Vice-Presidential Power, 28–34. The phrase “professional mourner” is used by a Mondale aide, quoted in ibid., 29.

CHAPTER 5. THE SECRETARY OF STATE AS LIGHTNING ROD

1. During each of the twelve years of the Reagan and Bush presidencies, the secretary of state was the most visible official within the administration with only one exception. That exception came in 1988, when Vice President George Bush was a presidential candidate. The New York Times Index tells exactly the same story, as anyone who has ever tried to count references to a secretary of state can testify. Also see Herbert J. Gans, Deciding What’s News: A Study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek, and Time (New York: Pantheon, 1979), 10.


3. Between December 1950 and September 1951, Gallup asked respondents on four separate occasions to tell them “who Mr. Dean Acheson is.” In each of the four surveys about two-thirds of the general public was able to correctly identify Dean Acheson as head of the State Department and usually about another 5 percent was partly correct, identifying him as a cabinet member or as a secretary of some depart-

4. AIPO-594, January 24–29, 1958. Two years into President Eisenhower’s first term, the National Opinion Research Corporation asked whether the respondent had “ever heard of John Foster Dulles” (85 percent said they had) and then asked the respondent to identify Dulles’s job. Close to 62 percent (52 percent of the whole sample) of those who claimed to have heard of Dulles correctly identified his job. Roughly another 10 percent had some knowledge that Dulles was a diplomat or cabinet member (NORC-54, November 29–December 8, 1954). Dulles served as secretary of state from January 1953 until resigning in April 1959, one month before dying of cancer.


6. Greenstein, Hidden-Hand Presidency, 90. Also see Brands, Cold Warriors, 125. In a conversation in December 1956, Dulles told Harold Macmillan that “it was an error to believe that he and the President could be separated. He wrote most of the Presidential statements himself. When they had to be tough, they were made by the Secretary of State . . . When they were idealistic, they were made by the President but written by the Secretary of State” (Townsend Hoopes, The Devil and John Foster Dulles [Boston: Little, Brown, 1973], 389).


9. Duane Tananbaum, The Bricker Amendment Controversy: A Test of Eisenhower’s Political Leadership (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1987), 78. The Bricker amendment carried enormous emotional freight for conservative “Old Guard” Republicans because it tapped into their intense dislike for the agreements reached by Presidents Roosevelt and Truman at Teheran, Yalta, and Potsdam, as well as their fear that international charters like the proposed United Nations Covenant on Human Rights would override American laws and liberties.


14. Ibid., esp. 78–79, 96, 111. Also see Parmet, Eisenhower and the American
Crusades, 310; and Louis Gerson, John Foster Dulles (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1967), 120.

15. Tananbaum, Bricker Amendment Controversy, 111. The interview with Bricker was conducted by Tananbaum in 1975.

16. Ibid., 111. Tananbaum's fine case study, while supporting Greenstein's hidden-hand thesis, also provides compelling evidence of the costs of that leadership style—costs that are quite similar to those that I identify in Chapter 7.


18. Tananbaum, Bricker Amendment Controversy, 111.

19. This version of events was presented in Herman Finer's influential book, Dulles over Suez: The Theory and Practice of His Diplomacy (Chicago: Quadrangle, 1964). Townsend Hoopes concluded that "in perhaps no other decision during his tenure at the State Dept. did [Dulles] play so lone a hand" (Devil and John Foster Dulles, 340).


21. Hubert H. Humphrey, The Education of a Public Man (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1976), 199-200. In his memoirs, Khushchev characterizes Dulles as a "vicious cur" but also makes less than flattering remarks about Eisenhower. "Our people whose job it was to study Eisenhower closely," Khushchev explained, "have told me that they considered him a mediocre military leader and a weak President. He was a good man, but he wasn't very tough. There was something soft about his character. As I discovered in Geneva, he was much too dependent on his advisors" (Nikita S. Khushchev, Khrushchev Remembers [New York: Little, Brown, 1970], 398). Also see Fawn M. Brodie, Richard Nixon: The Shaping of His Character (New York: Norton, 1981), 379.

22. Neff, Warriors at Suez, 302. Also see The Memoirs of Anthony Eden: Full Circle (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1960). In his retirement, Eden described Dulles as being "as tortuous as a wounded snake, with much less excuse" (Louis, "Dulles, Suez, and the British," 158; also see 133-34, 151).

23. See Newsweek, January 27, 1958, 28-29; and Neff, Warriors at Suez, esp. 19, 143, 205, 208-9, 214-15, 302, 330. Dulles became even more unpopular in British and French circles after his widely quoted comment in January 1957 to the effect that "if I were an American soldier who had to fight in the Middle East, I would rather not have a British and a French soldier, one on my right and one on my left." A Canadian newspaper, the Calgary Herald, reacted by calling Dulles "an international catastrophe." "Mr. Dulles must hold the record for losing more international good will than any other United States Secretary of State in history. His stupidity is scarcely credible. Eisenhower ought to fire him forthwith" (Congressional Record, February 19, 1957, 2222).

24. Lewis Douglas, quoted in Robert Paul Browder and Thomas G. Smith, Independent: A Biography of Lewis W. Douglas (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986), 385. Douglas was an ambassador to Great Britain under President Truman before backing Eisenhower in 1952 and 1956. During the first term he was one of Eisenhower's informal advisers, and he was among the names rumored to be under consideration for the treasury post after George Humphrey's resignation. Douglas became
disenchanted with Eisenhower in his second term because he felt the president had “abdicated to a pretty second-rate group of people” (390). After Eisenhower’s death, Douglas rendered a less than flattering (and grossly inaccurate) verdict of his friend’s presidency: “He had a very poor understanding of the structure of [the] American federal government. I think he looked upon the Presidency as though perhaps it was somewhat analogous to a crown” (391).

25. Finer, *Dulles over Suez*, 11. Similarly, Hans Morgenthau wrote that Eisenhower “trusted Dulles so completely and admired his ability as Secretary of State so unreservedly that he gave him, for all practical purposes, a free hand to conduct the foreign policy of the United States as he saw fit” (“John Foster Dulles,” in Norman Graebner, ed., *An Uncertain Tradition: American Secretaries of State in the Twentieth Century* [New York: McGraw Hill, 1961], 302).


27. Greenstein writes that “with Dulles, unlike any other cabinet member, Eisenhower entered into a collegial working relationship” (*Hidden-Hand Presidency*, 87).

28. According to Andrew Bertling, assistant secretary of state for public affairs under Dulles: “The Secretary never took an action of any importance whatsoever without first consulting with the President and getting his OK. . . . Dulles never made a speech of any importance . . . that he did not send . . . to the President, and he would not make the speech until the President had sent the text back. . . . If Dulles were going to have a press conference, and he knew certain important things were going to come up at that press conference, he would check first with the President and tell the President what he himself, Dulles, expected to say” (Oral History-16, June 13, 1967, COHP, EL, 27–29).

Eisenhower said much the same thing in his memoirs: “[Dulles] would not deliver an important speech or statement until I had read, edited, and approved it.” Eisenhower went on to explain that Dulles “guarded constantly against the possibility that any misunderstanding could arise between us. It was the mutual trust and understanding, thus engendered, that enabled me, with complete confidence, to delegate to him an unusual degree of flexibility as my representative in international conferences, well knowing that he would not in the slightest degree operate outside the limits previously agreed between us” (*Waging Peace, 1956–1961* [Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1965], 365).

29. The revisionist scholarship on the Eisenhower/Dulles relationship has been enormously salutary, but as Richard Immerman points out, some of these studies have left the mistaken impression that Dulles “did little more than carry out Eisenhower’s directives and take the heat that they generated.” The president did retain control over the making of foreign policy but, as Immerman stresses, “Dulles was an integral actor in the sphere of formulation as well as implementation. Eisenhower did not dominate Dulles any more than we once thought the reverse true. Moreover, because their levels of interest and expertise differed, their contributions to different policy issues and areas varied. On some occasions Dulles took the lead; on others it was Eisenhower. They were in a real sense a team” (Immerman, “Introduction,” in *Dulles and the Diplomacy of the Cold War*, 9). To the extent that Dulles’s input was
critical in shaping and not just executing foreign policy, the lightning rod idea can be a misleading metaphor that obscures more than it reveals. This is a point I pursue in greater depth in Chapter 7, which analyzes Brownell's role in shaping civil rights policy.

30. Ambrose, Eisenhower, 442.
33. For Eisenhower this four-year-average approval rating is based on fifty-one Gallup polls reported in "Presidential Popularity: A 43 Year Review," The Gallup Opinion Index (October-November 1980). For Dulles the average is based on twenty-one surveys conducted by the NORC, all of which asked: "In general, do you approve or disapprove of the way John Foster Dulles is handling his job as Secretary of State in Washington?" Those with no opinion for Dulles ranged from a low of 17 percent to a high of 40 percent; those with no opinion for Eisenhower ranged from a low of 9 percent to a high of 25 percent.
35. Parmet, Eisenhower and the American Crusades, 402.
36. The cartoon is reproduced in both Ambrose, Eisenhower, and Hoopes, Devil and John Foster Dulles, 292.
38. Parmet, Eisenhower and the American Crusades, 411.
41. Immerman, "Introduction," 11. Relevant here is Herbert Parmet's observation that "every public address made by the Secretary was delivered with concern for its popular response. One of the frequent criticisms of such statements cited their obvious and pious moralizing, but Dulles was more conscious of his audience than were his critics. He carefully avoided complex language and rejected Latin words, which were always removed from the final drafts of his speeches. . . . While intellectuals sneered, Dulles's mail usually brought fabulous responses to his speeches from the Midwest" (Parmet, American Crusades, 187).
42. Newsweek, January 27, 1958, 29.
43. As one letter to the editor expressed it: "For the first time in many years, we have a Secretary of State who puts his country above Western Europe. His predecessor, pro-British Dean Acheson, was often called 'the best Secretary of State England ever had.' But Dulles has usually stood for our interests" (Newsweek, February 24, 1958, 6).
44. Nor was Dulles inattentive to or unconcerned with public opinion. Dulles was well aware of how the public regarded his performance, as a memo he sent to Eisenhower at the outset of 1957 demonstrates. Attached to the memo were two fold-out charts graphing public support for Dulles and for the administration's handling of foreign affairs (Dulles to Eisenhower, January 30, 1957, Dulles-Herter Series, AWF, EL). Dulles's attention to public opinion is also accentuated in Neff, Warriors at Suez. Howard Cook, a State Department official, agrees that Dulles was "very conscious of public relations" and even suggests that Dulles "enjoyed this sort of thing" (Oral History-175, December 31, 1970, COHP, EL, 7, also see 5-6).
52. A Gallup poll released in October 1953 found that 81 percent of the respondents had not “heard or read anything about Senator Bricker’s proposal of an amendment to the Constitution to limit the President’s treaty-making power” (Tananbaum, *Bricker Amendment Controversy*, 128).
54. Almond, *American People and Foreign Policy*, 71. Rosenau uses the analogy of a “gigantic theatre” in which “the mass public, occupying the main seats in the balcony, is so far removed from the scene of action that its members can hardly grasp the plot, much less hear all the lines or distinguish between the actors. . . . The attentive public, on the other hand, is located in the few choice orchestra seats. Its members can not only hear every spoken line clearly, but can also see the facial expressions of the actors” (*Public Opinion and Foreign Policy*, 34).
56. This is operationalized by Rosenau as those senators who served more than ten legislative months between 1953 and 1956 and who averaged more than 0.7 references to Dulles a month. By “consistently hostile” I mean that more than half of their references to Dulles were recorded by Rosenau as unfavorable.


62. This was from a 1961 article written by Fulbright for the *Cornell Law Quarterly*. Quoted in Eleanor Lansing Dulles, *John Foster Dulles: The Last Year* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1963), 31. Fulbright is quoting from *U.S. v. Curtiss-Wright* (1936), which spoke of "the very delicate, plenary and exclusive power of the President as the sole organ of the federal government in the field of international relations."


64. Ibid., June 20, 1958, 11844. In a 1961 law review article, Fulbright wrote that Eisenhower was "an exemplary head of state" but his "failure to exercise the full measure of his powers and duties as 'Prime Minister' was the cause of basic failures and omissions in our foreign policy" (Lynn and McClure, *Fulbright Premise*, 114).


67. Lehman insisted that "the first duty of liberals is not to exercise power, but to uphold principle" (*Congressional Record*, 85th Cong., 1st sess., March 2, 1957, 2950).


72. Ibid., 121.


76. British opposition to Dulles's appointment was enough to persuade Walter Judd (R-Minn.) that Dulles would be a welcome departure from Acheson. "For too long," Judd told Eisenhower, "our State Department has been a kind of outpost of the British foreign office" (Walter Judd, Oral History-196, December 18, 1970, COHP, EL, 109).

77. *Congressional Record*, 83d Cong., 1st sess., June 30, 1953, 7647. The fear that Dulles was "a part of the old regime" was common among right-wing isolationists. See, e.g., George Malone, ibid., April 14, 1953, 3067–68; and Frank Holman to


86. See the enclosed chart in Dulles to Eisenhower, January 30, 1957, Dulles-Hertler Series, AWF, EL.
88. Senator Hugh Butler of Nebraska, quoted in Goldman, *Crucial Decade*, 125.
89. *Congressional Record*, 81st Cong., 2d sess., December 6, 1950, 16178.
95. See, for example, *Congressional Record*, 81st Cong., 2d sess., January 13, 1950, 389–90.
96. Ibid., 82d Cong., 1st sess., April 12, 1951, 3720. Also see September 27, 1950, 13283–84.
97. Ibid., 81st Cong., 2d sess., January 24, 1950, 815, emphasis added.
98. See, for example, ibid., January 23, 1950, 756; January 25, 1950, 893; January 26, 1950, 1006, 1008.
101. *Congressional Record*, 82d Cong., 1st sess., April 11, 1951, 3633, 3654, 3657, and April 12, 1951, 3719.


105. Ibid., April 13, 1951, 3863.

106. Ibid., April 12, 1951, 3724-25.

107. Ibid., April 11, 1951, 3619.


110. Of those who disapproved of Truman, 81 percent believed Acheson should be replaced. Of those who approved of Truman, 70 percent thought Acheson should stay on. About two-thirds of those with an opinion about both men disapproved of Truman and believed Acheson should be replaced (AIPO-475, May 19-24, 1951).

111. AIPO-480, September 21-26, 1951.

112. NORC-313, October 3-11, 1951. NORC-329, September 2-10, 1952.


114. Richard F. Fenno, Jr., *The President's Cabinet* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1959), 49. Similarly, Cabell Phillips writes that "to Harry Truman a sense of loyalty was as natural as breathing, and he used every opportunity to reiterate his faith in Dean Acheson" (*The Truman Presidency: The History of a Triumphant Succession* [New York: Macmillan, 1966], 288). Also see Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, 730.


116. Harry S. Truman, *Years of Trial and Hope* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1956), 430; emphasis in original.


120. Truman quoted by Senator Kem, in *Congressional Record*, 81st Cong., 2d sess., December 4, 1950, 16058.


127. Ibid., 82d Cong., 1st sess., April 11, 1951, 3652–53.
128. Ibid., January 13, 1951, 391.
129. The question was worded, "Some people think that president ought to have the major responsibility for making policy, while other people think that Congress ought to have the major responsibility. In general, which do you think should have the major responsibility for setting (foreign/economic/energy) policy?" Poll results are reported in Stephen J. Wayne, "Expectations of the President," in Doris A. Graber, ed., The President and the Public (Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1982), 19. Also see the data presented in Robert S. Sigel, "Image of the American Presidency: Part II of An Exploration into Popular Views of Presidential Power," in Aaron Wildavsky, ed., The Presidency (Boston: Little, Brown, 1969), esp. 299–300. Also relevant is Michael B. MacKuen, "Political Drama, Economic Conditions, and the Dynamics of Presidential Popularity," American Journal of Political Science 27 (May 1983): 165–92.
130. In their recent text, George C. Edwards III and Stephen J. Wayne write, "The general public, party leaders, and elected officials continue to look to the president for guidance [in foreign affairs] . . . the president is expected to take the policymaking initiative in [foreign and military affairs]. He is expected to oversee the conduct of war and diplomacy" (Presidential Leadership: Politics and Policy Making, 2d ed. [New York: St. Martin's, 1990], 416, 425).
134. Most presidential scholars share this view. Thomas E. Cronin, for instance, writes that "foreign policy responsibilities cannot be delegated; they are executive in character and presidential by constitutional tradition or interpretation" (The State of the Presidency, 2d ed. [Boston: Little, Brown, 1980], 146). Clinton Rossiter explains that "the President . . . is or ought to be in command of every procedure through which our foreign relations are carried on from one day to the next" (The American Presidency [New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1960], 27). The president, according to Richard Rose, "rightly sees national security, the object of diplomacy and military policy, as a unique concern for the White House" (The Postmodern President: George Bush Meets the World, 2d ed. [Chatham, N.J.: Chatham House, 1991], 215). Even those scholars critical of this tendency to view foreign relations as primarily a presidential responsibility concede that "the realm of foreign policy has come to be accepted, with important exceptions, as being primarily the domain of the President" (Robert J. Spitzer, President and Congress: Executive Hegemony at the Crossroads of American Government [New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993], 233).
137. Theodore H. White, The Making of the President, 1968 (New York: Atheneum, 1969), 171. In his memoirs, Nixon recounts being told by John Kennedy that "foreign affairs is the only important issue for a President to handle. . . . I mean, who gives a shit if the minimum wage is $1.15 or $1.25 in comparison to something like [the Bay of Pigs]" (Richard Nixon: RN: Memoirs of Richard Nixon [New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1978], 235).
138. Harlan Cleveland, "Coherence and Consultation: The President as Manager of American Foreign Policy," in Bailey and Shafritz, eds., The American Presidency,
259. Thomas Cronin suggests that “White House advisers from all the recent administrations agree that a president spends a half to two-thirds of his time on foreign-policy or national-security deliberations” (State of the Presidency, 146).

139. John H. Kessel, “The Parameters of Presidential Politics,” Social Science Quarterly 55 (June 1974): 10. Kessel found that attention to international affairs grew over time, “not evenly, but in a pattern that can be related to the election cycle. It mounts during the first, second and third years, then drops as a president faces reelection in his fourth year. During a president’s second term, concern with international involvement grows again. During the sixth, seventh and eighth years, the loadings on this factor become substantially higher than they were during the first term.” This pattern, Kessel concluded, “implies that institutional responsibilities call a president’s attention to international problems whether he brings an interest in foreign affairs to the White House or not.”


141. The seminal study here is Aaron Wildavsky, “The Two Presidencies,” reprinted in Aaron Wildavsky, ed., The Presidency (Boston: Little, Brown, 1969), 230–43. Several studies have shown that the gap in congressional support between foreign and domestic policy has declined since the period that Wildavsky examined (1948 to 1964), but even these studies reaffirm that presidents generally do get somewhat greater congressional support in foreign than in domestic policy (see Lance T. LeLoup and Steven Shull, “Congress versus the Executive: The ‘Two Presidencies’ Reconsidered,” Social Science Quarterly 59 [March 1979]: 704–19; and George C. Edwards III, “The Two Presidencies: A Reevaluation,” American Politics Quarterly 14 [July 1986]: 247–63).


142. Cronin, State of the Presidency, 146. Bryce Harlow comments that “Presidents like Eisenhower and Nixon have been more immersed in foreign than domestic affairs” because “they have felt they could do more” (Emmet John Hughes, The Living Presidency [New York: Penguin, 1974], 345).

143. Edwards and Wayne, Presidential Leadership, 426. Also see Cronin, State of the Presidency, 147–48.

144. The phrase “going international” is taken from Rose, Postmodern President, 37–40.


146. Ezra Suleiman observes much the same pattern among modern French presidents. French presidents gravitate toward foreign affairs, Suleiman suggests, because
“it creates a more prestigious presidential image than do other roles that he assumes. Here the President represents France, and not merely a political party” (Ezra N. Suleiman, “Presidential Government in France,” in Richard Rose and Ezra Suleiman, eds., Presidents and Prime Ministers [Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1981], 38).


151. Survey no. 272, January 16–19, 1987, The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion 1987, 15–17. The survey found that 49 percent felt it was worse if the NSC ran it without the president’s knowledge, and 36 percent felt it was worse if the president knew and approved.

152. Hess, Organizing the Presidency, 66.


155. According to John Eisenhower, when he told his father that Allen Dulles had let him down and should therefore be fired, the president exploded, “I am not going to shift the blame to my underlings” (Beschloss, Mayday, 271).

156. Eisenhower, Waging Peace, 553.

157. Walter Lippmann, quoted in Beschloss, Mayday, 251.

158. A CBS/New York Times poll taken in March 1975 found that only 49 percent of the public felt Ford was playing a “very important” role in foreign-policy decision making, while 73 percent felt Kissinger played such a role. Close to half (44 percent) of those polled thought Ford should play a more important role in foreign policy.


160. These numbers are averages based on the three Harris surveys (March 1975, May 1975, and August 1975) for which these follow-up questions were asked about both Kissinger and Ford. Adding results from separate polls conducted in early 1976 reduces Ford’s support scores by a point or two and has no effect on Kissinger’s.


162. For instances of such friction during Nixon’s presidency, see Henry Kissinger, The White House Years (Boston: Little, Brown, 1979), especially 25, 918, 1408–10, 1424, 1455, 1468. John Ehrlichman complained that Kissinger’s “press conferences were full of the President when there was bad news, but Nixon was seldom mentioned when the news was good” (Witness to Power: The Nixon Years [New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982], 315). Also see Barry M. Goldwater with Jack Casserly, Goldwater (New York: Doubleday, 1988), 270. The opening years of the Reagan presidency, to take another example, were dotted with stories like the one in which Hedrick Smith reported, “Once again, White House officials are mumbling
privately about Mr. Haig's 'grandstanding.' Some say he has not only taken center stage but even 'stolen the limelight' from President Reagan by making an extended public statement this afternoon on the Falklands crisis." (New York Times, April 15, 1982, quoted in Alexander M. Haig, Jr., Caveat: Realism, Reagan, and Foreign Policy [New York: Macmillan, 1984], 302).

163. Wildavsky, "The Two Presidencies." Also see Duane Oldfield and Wildavsky, "Reconsidering the Two Presidencies," in Shull, The Two Presidencies, 182. Oldfield and Wildavsky retreat significantly from the original Wildavsky thesis, going so far as to suggest that "the two presidencies" is "time and culture bound" (183). In my view, they retreat further from the original thesis than is warranted by the evidence (see Fleisher and Bond, "Are There Two Presidencies?"); Renka and Jones, "The Two Presidencies in the Reagan and Bush Administrations"; and especially Sullivan, "A Matter of Fact"). Part of the problem seems to be that Oldfield and Wildavsky tend to conflate the question of partisan divisions, which have indeed increased in foreign policy (see Chapter 8), with the different (though importantly related) question of differences between congressional support in foreign and domestic policy, where differences persist. It is possible to have two presidencies and simultaneously to have strong partisan divisions in foreign policy.

CHAPTER 6. THE CHIEF OF STAFF AS LIGHTNING ROD


4. Kernell and Popkin, Chief of Staff, 89. President Ford concurs that "the Chiefs of Staff we had . . . weren't worried about getting their face in a picture with the President; they weren't worrying about getting recognition themselves; they ran the shop" (quoted in Bradley H. Patterson, Jr., The Ring of Power: The White House Staff and Its Expanding Role in Government [New York: Basic Books, 1988], 306).

5. Michael Medved, The Shadow Presidents: The Secret History of the Chief Executives and Their Top Aides (New York: Times Books, 1979), 259. Speaking to the Paper and Pulp Association early in 1954, Adams explained that upon being asked to address the association he decided to make an exception to a rule that he thought members of the president's staff should observe: "Keep your name out of the newspapers." "Perhaps I should do a better job of that," he added, "or, as my boss said, 'Never miss an opportunity to keep your mouth closed' " (New York Times, February 19, 1954, 1). Also see "The President's Buffer: Sherman Adams," New York

6. Donald T. Regan, For the Record: From Wall Street to Washington (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1988), 226. Regan further reveals that “as an antidote to the leaks to the media that had plagued the White House in the first term, I asked [the assistants to the president] all to cultivate a passion for anonymity” (237).


8. Brownlow, Passion for Anonymity, 381.

9. “You can’t just have one Executive Secretary,” Roosevelt explained to Brownlow. “The damn columnists would never let him alone. They are always looking for the ‘white haired boy.’ Just now they are writing up Corcoran. Way back, it was Raymond Moley” (Brownlow, Passion for Anonymity, 381). A good example of the media’s fascination with Corcoran is Alva Johnston, “White House Tommy,” Saturday Evening Post, July 31, 1937. Also see Patrick Anderson, The President’s Men (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1968), esp. 41–42; and Joseph P. Lash, Dealers and Dreamers: A New Look at the New Deal (New York: Doubleday, 1988), esp. 307–8.

10. These three functions are identified and described in Hart, Presidential Branch, 127–28.


12. Don Regan, quoted in Michael K. Deaver, Behind the Scenes (New York: Morrow, 1987), 130. Donald Rumsfeld uses an even more telling metaphor: “[The chief of staff is] the person who sets up the staff system so that there is an orderly flow of work, meetings, paper, appointments, thought, and action, and that it satisfies the president, and serves the president. You bring those disparate threads up through a needle eye” (Patterson, Ring of Power, 303).


16. Kernell and Popkin, Chief of Staff, 128. A similar line was taken by members of Cheney’s staff, “almost all of [whom] concede that they are in a position of exercising enormous power, but add that it is delegated power that can be used only in a way that exactly matches the president’s desires” (New York Times, May 24, 1976, 18, emphasis added). Similarly, Donald Rumsfeld insists that “the answer to the question about what influence any of the various chiefs of staff have had on their presidents is: exactly what the president wanted” (Kernell and Popkin, Chief of Staff, 129, emphasis added).


18. Haldeman, quoted in Kernell and Popkin, Chief of Staff, 129.

218–19; and Robert Hartmann’s comments quoted in Patricia Dennis Witherspoon, *Within These Walls: A Study of Communication between Presidents and Their Senior Staffs* (New York: Praeger, 1991), 159.


25. Helen Nicolay, *Lincoln’s Secretary: A Biography of John G. Nicolay* (New York: Longmans, 1949), 86. After showing the letter to Lincoln, Nicolay received permission to send it and then marked it “not sent” and laid it away. In his book of reminiscences, Stoddard characterized Nicolay as “the impassable Mr. Nicolay” who “has a fine faculty of explaining to some men the view he takes of any untimely persistency. . . . People who do not like him—because they cannot use him, perhaps—say he is sour and crusty. Good thing that he is. The President showed his good judgment when he put Mr. Nicolay just where he is” (ibid., 86–88).


30. Ousted administrator Joseph English was one of a number of HEW officials who charged the Nixon staff with “not placing the issue of health before the President of the United States” (*New York Times*, October 12, 1969, 28).


39. “Much of the great deal of success in Reagan’s first term,” Stuart Eizenstat told a *New York Times* reporter, “was due to Jim Baker, who really has been the glue that has held the Administration together. . . . Without Baker, he would not have gotten out of the starting blocks as quickly and would have had a very different image than what the President has right now” (January 22, 1985, 16). In the fall of 1981, the *Times* reported that “Jim Baker . . . has emerged on Capitol Hill as the key figure who engineered President Reagan’s triumph in the Saudi arms sale. ‘It was
Jim Baker and no other,' said one Senate aide. 'Baker just took over, handled the phones, got people in to see Reagan, got Reagan to make the calls, and knew who to call and who was wavering'" (November 3, 1981, II:10).


42. Kernell and Popkin, *Chief of Staff*, 149.


45. William D. Carey, "Presidential Staffing in the Sixties and Seventies," *Public Administration Review* 29 (September–October 1969): 454. The President's Task Force on Government Organization wanted to see Califano's role formalized and strengthened. In what became known as the Heineman report, issued in the summer of 1967, the task force recommended that Johnson "must inform Cabinet subordinates that he expects them to meet upon the call of the Director [of the newly proposed Office of Program Coordination]; that he expects major matters of interdepartmental program coordination to be settled in the forum provided by the Director; and that, when agency heads remain unable to compose agreement, he expects agreement to emerge and to 'stick' along lines prescribed by the Director" (Stephen Hess, *Organizing the Presidency*, rev. ed. [Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1988], 99).


51. These points are well made in Kernell, "Creed and Reality," 219–21.

52. *New York Times*, February 6, 1958, 18, emphasis added. "When you have worked as close to a man for as many years as Sherm has worked with the President," noted an administration official, "you get to know automatically what the boss's attitude or reaction will be to almost any ordinary affair" (Cabell Phillips, "Adams Role Crucial in Eisenhower Setup," *New York Times*, June 22, 1958, IV:7).


57. Kernell and Popkin, *Chief of Staff*, 89.

58. Cheney's preference for a low profile was evident in his decision to decline Ford's offer of cabinet rank. Cheney turned it down, according to an associate, because "he wanted to be a nuts and bolts operator and felt to do that he had to keep a
low profile” (New York Times, May 24, 1976, 18). In interviews, Cheney tended to downplay his role. See, for example, National Journal, March 20, 1976, 377.

59. Cheney averaged a little more than three entries a month in the New York Times index in his fourteen-month tenure as chief of staff, a figure that is on the low end for contemporary chiefs of staff. During the last twenty years only Kenneth Duberstein (1.0), Jack Watson (2.7), Samuel Skinner (2.9), and Jim Baker (3.0) have had lower public profiles, as measured by this indicator. Cheney’s public profile appears to have been substantially lower than John Sununu (4.2), Hamilton Jordan (4.8), Howard Baker (4.8), Donald Rumsfeld (5.9), and Don Regan (7.8).

60. See, for example, New York Times, August 18, 1976, 1, 22.


62. When Reagan had surgery for removal of a polyp in July 1985, Regan found that “avoiding television appearances and keeping contacts with the press to a minimum” could not keep him out of the news. “In obedience to the First Lady’s wishes,” Regan recalls, “I was the only one besides herself who was seeing the President. Because he is news incarnate, that made me news” (Regan, For the Record, 20; emphasis added).


64. During Adams’s sixty-nine-month tenure, he averaged 7.8 entries a month in the New York Times index. From the time of Adams’s resignation in 1958 until 1973, the chief of staff (or “first among equals” where, as in Kennedy and Johnson’s times, there was no chief of staff) averaged only 1.8 entries a month. From 1973 until the end of Reagan’s term in 1988, the chief of staff averaged 5.9 entries a month in the Times. These numbers were calculated by the author from the Times index, using names and tenures of chiefs of staff and “first among equals” provided in Dennis J. Donoghue, “A Comparison of Republican and Democratic Chiefs of Staff from President Eisenhower through President Clinton” (Paper prepared for the Western Political Science Association Meetings, Anaheim, Calif., March 18–20, 1993).


66. The conventional portrait of Adams as a man obsessed with secrecy and oblivious to public relations is defied by the fact that it was Adams who was largely responsible for inviting journalist Robert J. Donovan into the White House to do a sympathetic behind-the-scenes look at the Eisenhower administration. Adams, by his own admission, was “Donovan’s guide and main source of information” (Adams, Firsthand Report, 29; also see New York Times, July 1, 1956, IV:7). Donovan’s book appeared shortly before the 1956 election as Eisenhower: The Inside Story (New York: Harper and Row, 1956).

67. In the Eisenhower administration, only John Foster Dulles, Richard Nixon, Charlie Wilson, Ezra Taft Benson, and Herbert Brownell were more prominent than Adams.

68. Of all subsequent chiefs of staff, only Al Haig (15.8) has a higher monthly average of entries in the New York Times index. Adams’s visibility, as measured by this
indicator, is comparable to the visibility of Reagan's outspoken chief of staff Don Regan (7.8).


70. Among the many public forums Adams addressed during his almost six years in the White House were a two-day conference of Republican women in Washington, D.C., a luncheon session closing the 44th annual convention of the Association of National Advertisers, the fourth annual American Forest Congress, a Republican National Committee luncheon, the American Paper and Pulp convention, the 100th anniversary luncheon of the National Association of Cotton Manufacturers, a meeting of the Citizens for Eisenhower Congressional Committee, a luncheon session of the 20th annual international distribution congress of National Sales Executives, Connecticut's "Salute to Eisenhower" dinner, a luncheon at the annual meeting of the National Advertising Council, the Republican National convention, the 102nd annual meeting of the National Textile Association, a conference of the Smaller Business Association, the fiftieth anniversary dinner of the American Jewish Committee, a dinner at a Republican regional conference in Trenton, a region-wide finance meeting of the Republican National Committee delivered to Southern Republican leaders in Chattanooga, a $100-a-plate fund-raiser at the Cow Palace given by the San Francisco Republican Finance Committee, a luncheon meeting of the Republican Forum in Chicago, a nationally broadcast speech to six hundred Missouri Republicans at a $100-a-plate fund-raising dinner, the Minnesota United Republican dinner, Dartmouth College alumni dinner, as well as commencement exercises at St. Lawrence University, Bates College, Centre College in Danville, Ky., the University of Maine, and Holderness secondary school. See *New York Times*, April 24, 1953; September 24, 1953; October 31, 1953; February 7, 1954; February 19, 1954; May 21, 1954; June 1, 1954; June 10, 1955; January 21, 1956; April 4, 1956; August 22, 1956; September 28, 1956; October 3, 1956; April 14, 1957; May 25, 1957; October 3, 1957; October 15, 1957; November 19, 1957; December 10, 1957; January 21, 1958; February 6, 1958; June 8, 1953; June 14, 1954; June 3, 1957; June 10, 1957; and June 9, 1958.

71. See especially *New York Times*, February 19, 1954, 1; November 19, 1957, 26; February 6, 1958, 1.

72. See *New York Times*, February 24, 1953, 31; October 22, 1954, 4; October 17, 1955, 4, 2; October 19, 1955, 1; February 9, 1955, 12; April 12, 1955, 17; July 21, 1955, 13; January 15, 1956, 69; January 16, 1956, 12; January 29, 1956, 52; April 17, 1956, 2; April 22, 1956, 10; August 15, 1956, 8; December 14, 1956, 24; February 2, 1957, 17; April 8, 1957, 17.

73. *New York Times*, July 14, 1954, 22. Also see March 31, 1953; February 17, 1956, 4; September 21, 1956, 33; June 22, 1957, 1; September 10, 1957, 24; October 22, 1957.


75. Cannon, *President Reagan*, 176; also see 80. Donald Regan agrees that Reagan "dislikes confrontations more than any man I have ever known" (Regan, *For the Record*, 98).


77. William Safire, *Before the Fall: An Inside View of the Pre-Watergate White House* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1975), 467. In a similar vein, Henry Kissinger writes that Nixon "disliked and dreaded . . . face-to-face confrontations" (*White House Years* [Boston: Little, Brown, 1979], 48; also see 45).

80. Ibid.; also see 224.
84. Pfiffner, “Staff versus the Cabinet,” 670.
89. Alexander M. Haig, Jr., *Caveat: Realism, Reagan, and Foreign Policy* (New York: Macmillan, 1984), 82, 86; also see 76, 85, 148–50. Also see Cannon, *President Reagan*, 150, 195, 201.
92. Haldeman, *Ends of Power*, 58. Shortly after Nixon's reelection, the *New York Times* described Haldeman as “the transmitter of Mr. Nixon's orders” (December 3, 1972, 14; emphasis added).
93. *New York Times*, February 8, 1972, 1. That it was a ruse is confirmed by Haldeman, who says, “I made the statement that I was told to make” (Kernell and Popkin, *Chief of Staff*, 89). Also see Safire, *Before the Fall*, 291.
95. Ibid., 13.
96. Ibid., February 9, 1972, 38.
98. Ibid., February 8, 1972.
100. Ibid., 10.
101. Ibid., September 22, 1972, 43, emphasis added.
103. Ibid., February 17, 1972.
104. Rose, *Postmodern President*, 181.


115. Cheney was reported to be “almost universally well-liked by members of the White House staff” (New York Times, May 24, 1976, 18).


117. Osborne, White House Watch, xxiv–xxv.

118. Ibid., xxv.


120. Kernell and Popkin, Chief of Staff, 178–79.


122. Ibid., December 12, 1990, II:12. Dole insists it was a slip of the tongue.


124. Ibid., December 24–30, 1990, 13. Six months later, however, Gingrich was quoted as saying about Sununu: “You have an extremely smart, energetic, tough assistant taking all the heat and delivering all the bad news. . . . A guy who’s willing to throw himself between you and your opponents everyday. It’s unbelievably valuable” (New York Times, June 26, 1991, 13). A similar judgment of Sununu’s value was offered by Democrat Tony Coelho: “If you didn’t have Sununu there, some people in the Cabinet would be running around doing their own thing. You need to have a tough guy who makes things work. A president like George Bush needs John Sununu” (Washington Post Weekly, December 17–23, 1990, 7).


129. See New York Times, September 23, 1958, 19; June 15, 1958, 1, 42; June 16, 1958, 18; June 19, 1958, 1, 21; June 20, 1958, 1, 14; June 21, 1958, 1, 8; June 22, 1958, 1, 50; June 30, 1958, 1; August 14, 1958, 14; September 10, 1958, 1; September 11, 1958, 1; September 12, 1958, 17. Also see Medved, Shadow Presidents, 254, 256.


132. The same point is made in another context in Kernell, “Creed and Reality,” 220.


135. Ibid., December 1, 1986, 10; December 11, 1986, 23.

136. Regan, For the Record, 47–48, 378.

137. Even before Eisenhower’s first heart attack, Adams’s power was reported to be “almost unlimited” (U.S. News & World Report, November 5, 1954, 57). According to one noted columnist, “Until [the Goldfine] scandal broke, Mr. Adams’ authority to act for the President at the White House was absolute. . . . Mr. Adams’ slightest wish became a command for persons of Cabinet rank and below who feared his wrath if they did not comply” (W. H. Lawrence, “‘Adams Must Go’ Mood Revived By Elections,” New York Times, September 14, 1958, IV:9).

138. John Sununu has been identified as “the White House chief of everything”

139. Rose, Postmodern President, 182.


142. Regan, For the Record, 336.


145. Speakes, Speaking Out, 73–74.


147. Weinraub, “How Donald Regan Runs the White House,” 52. Only after the Iran-contra revelations did Regan attempt to downplay his control over the White House: “Does the bank president,” he asked, “know whether a teller in the bank is fiddling around with the books?” (New York Times, March 1, 1987, 12).


149. Ibid.

150. Ibid., December 5, 1985, 14.

151. Weinraub, “How Donald Regan Runs the White House,” 52.


156. Kernell and Popkin, Chief of Staff, 73–74. Hess, Organizing the Presidency, 132–33.


158. Hess, Organizing the Presidency, 142, 146. Witherspoon, Within These Walls, 120.

159. Witherspoon, Within These Walls, 114.

160. Ibid., 129.


163. Eizenstat, quoted in Witherspoon, Within These Walls, 129.

164. Richard Neustadt, “Does the White House Need a Strong Chief of Staff?” in Pfiffner, Managerial Presidency, 29. Also see Neustadt’s “confession” in Kernell and Popkin, Chief of Staff, 142–43. Neustadt does not, however, endorse a chief of staff in the mold of Regan, Adams, and Haldeman. Rather, he prefers the chief of staff to be “part of a circle . . . of three or four key, virtually coequal top advisors” (Neustadt, “Does the White House Need a Strong Chief of Staff?” 30).

166. This is the model recommended by James Pfiffner, “The President’s Chief of Staff: Lessons Learned,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 23 (Winter 1993): 77–102.

167. In assuming the role of chief of staff, Kennedy followed not only his own inclinations but the advice of several counselors, including Clark Clifford, who advised the president-elect that “a vigorous President in the Democratic tradition of the Presidency will probably find it best to act as his own chief of staff,” and Richard Neustadt, who told Kennedy that “if you follow my advice . . . you would be your own ‘chief of staff.’ You would oversee, coordinate, and interfere with virtually everything your staff was doing” (Clifford, Memorandum on Transition, November 9, 1960, quoted in Pfiffner, “White House Staff versus the Cabinet,” 668; and Neustadt, Memorandum on Staffing the President-Elect, October 30, 1960, reprinted in Pfiffner, *Managerial Presidency*, 21).

168. Stephen Hess gave president-elect Carter the same advice that “a president need not have a chief of staff—he can divide the duties—but he should not be his own chief of staff” (*Organizing the Presidency*, xi).

CHAPTER 7. LIMITS OF THE LIGHTNING ROD

2. See, for example, the Richmond *News Leader*, October 24, 1957, 12; *Arkansas Democrat*, October 25, 1957, 14; and *Mobile Register*, October 24, 1957, 8.
4. *Mobile Register*, October 24, 1957, 1, 10. Not everyone, however, was persuaded that Brownell’s successor, William P. Rogers, would be an improvement. The *Greenville Piedmont*, while sharing the belief that Eisenhower’s decision to send troops into Little Rock “was dictated by Brownell’s advice,” also took note that “behind Brownell stood Rogers as his first assistant.” They concluded that “Brownell is gone in name only. His policies remain in his successor. The South can take no comfort in that” (“Brownell Still with Us,” October 26, 1957). Similarly, the *Jackson Daily News*, while allowing that Brownell had “engineered the President into that ill-fated decision,” advised its readers to “hold up on the cheering” until we see “whether Rogers is a Brownell prototype” (“Hold up on the Shouting,” October 24, 1957, 10).


11. Byrnes to Eisenhower, November 20, 1953, Name Series, AWF, EL.

12. Eisenhower to Byrnes, December 1, 1953, Name Series, AWF, EL, emphasis added. Eisenhower was not being particularly duplicitous here. As Brownell acknowledges in his memoirs: "In my discussion with the president. . . . I knew I would not be persuasive if I made the argument [to accept the court's invitation] on [the basis of supporting civil rights]. Instead, I took a position that might resonate more favorably with Eisenhower's deep commitment to the importance of constitutional and professional duty—thus I told him that since I was an 'officer of the court' as a practicing attorney, it would be most difficult for me to reject the invitation to advise the Court. I also knew that Eisenhower would generally defer to my advice and trust my opinions on matters of the law and the legal process, an area in which he did not have extensive knowledge and experience, so I emphasized that the relationship between the Supreme Court and the Justice Department . . . would be strained if we refused the invitation" (*Advising Ike*, 190; also see 193, 215).

13. Eisenhower to Byrnes, December 1, 1953, Name Series, AWF, EL. In view of this correspondence, Byrnes's reaction to Little Rock is instructive. Although one of Eisenhower's most vocal backers in 1952, Byrnes was one of a multitude of southern politicians who immediately spoke out to condemn the administration's decision to send troops into Little Rock. While harshly criticizing the administration's decision, Byrnes still insisted that he had "complete confidence in the integrity of President Eisenhower," whom he characterized as "a man of good intentions." He accounted for the president's decision to send troops into Little Rock as the result of having "followed the advice of Attorney General Brownell, who had demonstrated a willingness to sacrifice everything to win the votes of certain minority groups in doubtful states." While unable to mask his disappointment with Eisenhower—he was "glad," he told his audience, that "I did not vote for him in 1956"—for having "blindly followed" the attorney general's advice, Byrnes reserved his fiercest barbs for "the master strategist," Herbert Brownell (*New York Times*, September 27, 1957, 12). That Byrnes placed the lion's share of the blame for the administration's actions on Attorney General Brownell rather than on the president seems to be a tribute to Eisenhower's ability to persuade Byrnes, through written correspondence and personal conversation, that his sympathies lay with southern whites and that it was Brownell and his associates at the Justice Department who were primarily responsible for administration actions in the area of civil rights.


17. Eisenhower had acted in much the same manner when confronted with press inquiries in November 1953 about Justice Department charges that Harry Dexter White, a Treasury Department aide who had died in 1946, had provided information to the Soviet Union and that President Truman had done nothing about it despite warnings from the FBI that White was a spy. Asked by reporters whether it was
proper, given that a grand jury had found insufficient evidence to prosecute, for the attorney general to characterize White as a spy, Eisenhower replied that “I am not either a judge nor am I an accomplished lawyer. . . . You are asking me to answer questions [when] . . . the Attorney General is here to answer it himself. Let him answer it.” Pressed as to whether he could say when Brownell would offer proof of the charges he had made, the president replied, “Of course I can’t. I just told you that he has got to handle this case in his own way.” Claiming that he did not have the information to make a judgment on the validity of the accusations, he informed the reporters that he had told Brownell “to follow your own conscience as to your duty” (News Conference, November 11, 1953, Public Papers, 763–65).

18. According to George Edwards’s calculations, Eisenhower’s approval rating in the South averaged 66.5 percent with a high of 68 percent (1955) and a low of 65 percent (1954). The average gap between approval for Eisenhower among southerners and nonsoutherners during the first term averaged 4 percent, with a high of 7 percent (1956) and a low of 1 percent (1954). See George C. Edwards III with Alec Gallup, Presidential Approval: A Sourcebook (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 155. For the purposes of the Gallup poll, “the South” consists of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.

19. Eisenhower seems also to have privately signaled his disagreement with Brown to some influential southerners. In a confidential letter to Virginia senator Willis Robertson, Virginius Dabney, editor of the Richmond Times-Dispatch, claims that “President Eisenhower told me that he ‘tried to stop’ the Warren decision in 1954, and ‘went just as far as I thought I properly could, but it didn’t have any effect’” (Dabney to Robertson, July 12, 1963, Dabney Papers, University of Virginia Library). Also see James W. Ely, Jr., The Crisis of Conservative Virginia: The Byrd Organization and the Politics of Massive Resistance (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1976), 105–6. Also see Stephen E. Ambrose, Eisenhower: The President (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984), 408.


21. Telephone Call, August 19, 1956, Ann Whitman Diary Series, AWF, EL.

22. Herbert S. Parmet, Eisenhower and the American Crusades (New York: Macmillan, 1972), 462. See also Eisenhower’s telephone conversation with Ovetta Culp Hobby, March 21, 1956, Ann Whitman Diary Series, AWF, EL.

23. Although one should be careful not to read too much into any one poll (particularly since in a Gallup poll, of 1,500 respondents the number of southern whites in the sample is usually close to 300), the Gallup survey conducted in the middle of July, which shows Eisenhower’s approval rating rebounding substantially from the last poll conducted at the end of June and first two days of July, does seem to indicate that Eisenhower’s efforts to distance himself from the civil rights bill at his July 3 news conference may have had some positive effect on southern audiences. The subsequent poll, taken between August 8 and 13, shows a sharp fall again in Eisenhower’s approval rating among southern whites. Three events would seem to be key to this decline. First, a presidential press conference at the end of July in which Eisenhower publicly and unambiguously opposed the trial-by-jury amendment favored by southern senators; second, a public statement issued by Eisenhower on August 2 that firmly condemned the Senate’s passage of the jury-trial amendment for weakening the nation’s commitment to civil rights; and third, Senate passage of the civil rights bill (with the jury-trial amendment intact) on August 7. In pointing to the importance of Eisenhower’s July 3 and July 31 press conferences and his August 2 statement, I am not suggesting that the southern public hung on Eisenhower’s every word, only that southern elites did. Southern newspapers that before the end of July
had held back from criticizing Eisenhower directly now saw the president as personally implicated in the civil rights bill. This elite discourse, in turn, shaped the way the public evaluated Eisenhower's performance.

25. Ibid., July 30, 1957, 14; August 3, 1957, 6; August 6, 1957, 10.
26. Mobile Register, March 12, 1957, 4; April 10, 1957, 4; April 17, 1957, 4.
27. Ibid., June 8, 1957, 4; June 9, 1957, 6; June 26, 1957, 4. Eisenhower evidently didn't think much of the speech either. He told a close friend, Swede Hazlett, that “I am just about to take off for Williamsburg where I am to address the Conference of Governors. I have a very banal and colorless talk to deliver. While it expresses an obvious truth—that governors ought to concern themselves more with retaining states' responsibilities if they are to retain states' rights—this subject has been so often discussed that I feel like I am giving a lecture on the virtues of sunlight” (June 24, 1957, in Robert Griffith, ed., Ike's Letters to a Friend, 1941–1958 [Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1984], 181).

28. See, e.g., the Mobile Register editorials of July 9, 16, 20, and 30, which criticize the bill as “indefensible,” “detestable,” and “iniquitous,” without ever mentioning Eisenhower's support for the bill.
29. Ibid., September 6, 1957, 6.
30. Minnich to Brundage, July 23, 1957, Legislative Leaders Series, AWF, EL.
32. Richmond Times-Dispatch, August 17, 1957, 6. The Times-Dispatch observed that Eisenhower's “popularity has become negative—an absence of hostility.”
33. In the four Gallup polls conducted between the end of June and the end of August (see Table 7.1), the average disapproval rating among southern whites was 25.5 percent, only a 2.5 percent rise over the 23 percent disapproval rating Eisenhower received in April. Those with no opinion, on the other hand, rose from 14 percent in April to an average of 22 percent in the same four summer polls.
34. Ibid., September 25, 1957, 1.
36. On September 22, Faubus told reporters: “I have no criticism whatever of the President in this matter; he has shown great patience and understanding in one of the most difficult problems facing this nation.” But, he added, “some of those in the palace guard have agitated the situation and caused trouble. They were motivated politically.” Asked to name some of the “palace guard,” Faubus replied, “Mr. Brownell for one; he was rather adamant and it was his Justice Department that came into the case improperly, we thought” (New York Times, September 23, 1957, 14). After Eisenhower had sent troops into Little Rock, Faubus delivered a speech, which opened by accusing “the Justice Department, under Herbert Brownell” of “cleverly concealed plans . . . for the military occupation of Arkansas.” He again assailed “the President's 'palace guard' ” and insisted that “all we have ever asked for is a little time, and patience and understanding, as so often expressed by the President himself, in solving the problem” (Mobile Register, September 27, 1957, 9).
38. Ibid., September 28, 1957, 8; September 29, 1957, D2; October 1, 1957, 14; October 3, 1957, 16.
40. Ibid., September 26, 1957, 4. Brownell's account of the southern reaction to Little Rock is misleading. Brownell writes, “I became a major target in the storm of
protest. The segregationist press in the South was particularly vitriolic in its personal attacks upon me—an easier target than the popular Eisenhower" (Advising Ike, 213). After Little Rock, though, Eisenhower was not popular in the South and the "segregationist press" had absolutely no hesitation about criticizing the president personally.

41. Mobile Register, September 28, 1957, 6; October 1, 1957, 6. The same tendency to link Eisenhower with his advisers can be seen in a letter to the Richmond Times-Dispatch, criticizing "the national Republican leadership personified by President Eisenhower, Vice President Nixon, Attorney General Brownell, and general flunky and office boy Sherman Adams" for bringing "about a latter day reconstruction in the South as part of its vitriolic 'hate-the-South' campaign" (October 3, 1957, 16).


43. Statement by the president on the civil rights bill, August 2, 1957, Public Papers, 587.

44. Cabinet Meeting, August 2, 1957, Cabinet Series, Office of the Staff Secretary, EL.

45. Public Papers, 176, 357, 521; quotation at 521. The dates of the news conferences were March 7, March 27, and May 15.

46. Richmond Times-Dispatch, July 9, 1957, 1, 11.

47. Ibid., July 17, 1957, 1, 12.


49. Ibid., July 10, 1957, 1; July 11, 1957, 9; July 13, 1957, 7; July 17, 1957, 12.

50. In his memoirs, Brownell admits that "Eisenhower's reluctance to associate himself with difficult policy decisions sometimes made it a little harder for [cabinet members] to do [their] jobs. I was, for example, a bit too vulnerable politically than I would have preferred to be in the Harry Dexter White affair and in the political battles over the Civil Rights Act of 1957." But Brownell goes on to add that, "I also understood [that] . . . had Eisenhower been more aggressive and forward in identifying himself with controversial policies, he might have weakened his ability to strike a bargain later down the road, and, especially, he might have compromised one of the high cards he could play in partisan battles: appearing to be above the political fray" (Advising Ike, 301).

51. See, for example, "Eisenhower's 'Stand' Aids Southerners," in Richmond Times-Dispatch, July 7, 1957, 5.

52. The costs and benefits of Eisenhower's blame-avoidance strategy are carefully and intelligently weighed in Greenstein, Hidden-Hand Presidency, especially in the final two chapters.


54. Ibid., 17.

55. After meeting with Eisenhower, Texas Governor Allan Shivers came away with a similar impression that the president "was leaving it to Brownell and the others. He didn't know the legal ramifications" (Oral History-238, December 23, 1969, COHP, EL, 49). The view that Eisenhower was not well informed and/or had been misled by his advisers was shared by many other players in the Little Rock affair. See, for example, R. A. Lile, Oral History-219, August 19, 1971, COHP, EL, 25; William J. Smith, Oral History-240, August 20, 1971, COHP, EL, 29.


57. After Eisenhower met with Senator Richard Russell on July 10, 1957, to dis-
cuss the civil rights bill, Ann Whitman reported that "he is not at all unsympathetic to the position people like Senator Russell take; far more ready than I, for instance, to entertain their views" (July 10, 1957, Ann Whitman Diary Series, AWF, EL).


60. Even Brownell found that "at times I was left a bit in the dark about his true feelings" (Advising Ike, 301).

61. Telephone Calls, July 3, 1957, DDE Diary Series, AWF, EL. Also see Prepress Conference Notes, July 3, 1957, DDE Diary Series, AWF, EL. In the same vein, Eisenhower confided to Swede Hazlett that “some of the language used in the attempt to translate my basic purposes into legislative provisions has probably been too broad” (July 22, 1957, in Ike's Letters to a Friend, 187).

62. Cabinet Meeting, March 9, 1956, Cabinet Series, Office of the Staff Secretary, EL.

63. See, for example, his March 14, 1956, press conference in which Eisenhower stated that “we must be understanding of other people's deep emotions” (Public Papers, 304).

64. Memorandum for the attorney general, n.d., Cabinet Series, AWF, EL.

65. Cabinet Meeting, March 23, 1956, Cabinet Series, Office of the Staff Secretary, EL.

66. The argument that Folsom presented in the cabinet meeting is more fully spelled out in a letter written to Brownell, March 19, 1956, Gerald D. Morgan papers, EL. On Eisenhower's hope that a bipartisan commission would act as a "buffer," see James C. Duram, *A Moderate among Extremists: Dwight D. Eisenhower and the School Desegregation Crisis* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1981), 131. At a meeting with legislative leaders earlier in the week Eisenhower had concluded that we should "stay away from controversy while [the] commission inquire[s]" (March 20, 1956, Legislative Meeting Series, OF, EL).

67. Cabinet Meeting, March 23, 1956, Cabinet Series, Office of the Staff Secretary, EL. Also see Legislative Leadership Meeting, April 17, 1956, DDE Diary Series, EL.

68. Memorandum from Gerald D. Morgan to Ann Whitman, March 24, 1956, DDE Diary Series, AWF, EL.


70. Eisenhower's willingness to defer to trusted cabinet members is perhaps sometimes underestimated by revisionists overanxious to demonstrate that Eisenhower was "in charge." So, for example, Fred Greenstein and Robert Wright write, "This is not to say that he didn't rely on advisers, but it is to say that he didn't defer to them" ("Reagan . . . Another Ike?" *Public Opinion* 3 [December/January 1981]: 55).


43–76, esp. 59–60. In a telephone conversation with Brownell, Eisenhower explained that he felt torn “between the compulsion of duty on one side, and his firm conviction, on the other, that because of the Supreme Court’s ruling, the whole issue had been set back badly” (Telephone Calls, August 19, 1956, Ann Whitman Diary Series, AWF, EL).

75. Press Conference, July 17, 1957, Public Papers, 547. Also see Eisenhower, Waging Peace, 156. Brownell reports that Eisenhower “had a very deep emotional feeling that the right to vote was absolutely fundamental to establish equal rights of citizenship” (Herbert Brownell, Oral History-157, COHP, EL, 214). Martin Luther King, Jr., echoed Eisenhower’s view: “Give us the ballot,” he told a Washington audience, “and we will no longer have to worry the Federal government about our basic rights” (Mayer, “Eisenhower’s Conditional Crusade,” 412–13).

76. Legislative Leadership Meeting, August 6, 1957, Legislative Meeting Series, Office of the Staff Secretary, EL.

77. “In the interests of gradual education and progress,” he informed a friend, “I had no objection to the elimination of Section III” (Eisenhower to R. W. Woodruff, August 6, 1957, Name Series, AWF, EL).

78. Cabinet Meeting, August 2, 1957, Cabinet Series, Office of the Staff Secretary, EL. Sherman Adams described Eisenhower as “bitterly disappointed” by the passage of the jury-trial amendment. (Firsthand Report [New York: Harper and Brothers, 1961], 342).

79. Statement by the president on the civil rights bill, August 2, 1957, Public Papers, 587. At his next press conference, Eisenhower reiterated his belief that the jury-trial amendment “would be most damaging to the entire Federal judiciary” (News Conference, August 7, 1957, Public Papers, 601).

80. Prepress Conference Briefing, April 17, 1957, DDE Diary Series, AWF, EL.

81. See Eisenhower to Richard Russell, September 27, 1957, Administration Series, AWF, EL.

82. The same tradeoff is evident in the battle over the Bricker amendment. Duane Tananbaum has shown that Eisenhower’s behind-the-scenes maneuverings against the amendment during 1953 allowed him to maintain cordial relations with Senator Bricker and made Brownell and Dulles the target of Bricker’s wrath, but also allowed the conflict to drag on for much longer than it would have had Eisenhower taken a strong, public stand from the outset. Ensuring defeat of the measure required that Eisenhower take a firm public stand against the measure, which he finally did in January 1954. Having declared his unambiguous opposition to the amendment, Eisenhower became, for the first time, a direct target for Bricker’s public attacks (The Bricker Amendment Controversy: A Test of Eisenhower’s Political Leadership [Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1987], esp. 78–79, 137–38, 190, 217–18).

83. Advising Ike, 218; also see 217.

84. Brownell recounts the development of the idea of section three entirely in the first person: “I initially concentrated almost exclusively on voting rights. . . . Then I began thinking about all the equal-protection matters that might come up during my testimony before Congress, and I decided that a more ambitious bill was necessary. So I created on my own, almost out of whole cloth, a set of proposals that would give the attorney general power to enforce civil rights; these proposals would become the controversial but important section three of the eventual bill” (Advising Ike, 218). Brownell also concedes that Eisenhower “was at times [disturbed about what I was doing], especially in civil rights” (301).

85. Administration actions in these areas are described in Maxwell Rabb, Oral History-265, October 16, 1970, COHP, EL; and Mayer, “Eisenhower’s Conditional Crusade,” esp. 495–501.
CHAPTER 8. BLAME AVOIDANCE AND POLITICAL ACCOUNTABILITY

1. A number of scholars, with their eyes on the substantial successes of statistical methods of analysis in the fields of voting behavior and congressional studies, have urged practitioners in the field to look for “statistical patterns in the presidency.” Gary King and Lyn Ragsdale, for instance, write that “presidential research is at a stage analogous to that at which the discipline of economics found itself in the 1950s and the study of the U.S. Congress found itself in the 1960s” (Gary King and Lyn Ragsdale, *The Elusive Executive: Discovering Statistical Patterns in the Presidency* [Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press, 1988], 484). The implication is that presidential studies can reach the dizzy heights achieved by these fields of study through emulating their usage of statistical techniques.

It is to be expected that fields that have had less success in explanation and prediction will look for guidance to those fields that have been more successful. But a method appropriate to one field of study may prove inappropriate in another. One thinks, for instance, of the checkered history of importing biological concepts of function and natural selection into the social sciences. I find it difficult to share King and Ragsdale’s optimism about the future of presidential studies, because the success of statistical analysis rests largely upon having a large number of units, such as votes or survey responses, that are amenable to numerical quantification. In some areas—the relationship between presidential popularity and the state of the economy being a notable example—the statistical method promises to be fruitful. In other areas, such as the relationship between leadership styles and presidential success, there is considerably less we can hope to achieve from statistical techniques. My reasons are elaborated in “What Can 19th Century Presidents Teach Us about the Twentieth Century Presidency,” delivered at the 1990 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, San Francisco, Calif., September 1990.

2. As Nelson W. Polsby has recently written, pundits and politicians’ loyalties are to their conclusions rather than their premises. It is political scientists, Polsby reminds us, who are paid to “think about the premises, and . . . whether or not they are well founded” (“Where Do You Get Your Ideas?” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 26 [March 1993]: 86).

3. The same political motives are often at work in reverse when opponents label an adviser a liability to the president. Critics who portrayed Ezra Taft Benson as a liability to Eisenhower, for example, were interested in persuading the president to dump an adviser whom they believed to be hostile to their objectives and, in the case of farm-state congressmen, an obstacle to their chances for reelection. That they tagged Benson a liability to the president may in fact be evidence that the secretary was serving as a lightning rod—if, as seems to be the case, they believed that without Benson the president’s policies would have been significantly different.


16. Haynes Johnson, In the Absence of Power (New York: Viking, 1980), 168. In the same vein, Nelson W. Polsby has argued that "in time, Mr. Carter's natural allies despaired of cooperating with him, as did leaders of many of the interest groups—especially labor unions—who were natural allies of a Democratic President. All these negative attitudes drifted downward to the general public and sooner or later began to be reflected in low scores for the President in public opinion surveys measuring general confidence in the way he was doing his job" (Nelson W. Polsby, Congress and the Presidency, 4th ed. [Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1986], 65).


19. A further difficulty with Kernell's argument is that it fails to explain why models of presidential popularity based largely on economic numbers do least well for President Eisenhower (see Samuel Kernell's own "Explaining Presidential Popularity," American Political Science Review 72 [June 1978]: 518; as well as Charles W. Ostrom, Jr., and Dennis M. Simon, "Promise and Performance: A Dynamic Model of Presidential Popularity," American Political Science Review 79 [June 1985]: 351). If Kernell's formulation were correct one would expect to find that models built upon objective economic indicators would do most well for a president like Eisenhower and would do least well for a more recent president like Reagan. But in fact we find the reverse. Reagan's popularity can be much more precisely modeled using basic economic indicators than can Eisenhower's. This suggests that, if anything, elite cues and media portrayals may have been more important for Eisenhower's popularity than for Reagan's.
20. My discussion here draws on Eric R. A. N. Smith, *The Unchanging American Voter* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 159–60. A study that surveyed "all available questions" measuring political knowledge asked between 1947 and 1962 found that whereas in the first eight years there was an average of eleven such questions a year, in the last four years that average had dropped to one question a year. The study cited is Hazel G. Erskine, "The Polls: Textbook Knowledge," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 27 (1963): 133–41.


22. Why has a transformation in the public’s information levels about politics not resulted from the undeniable transformation in the volume of information transmitted? Part of the explanation may lie in the nature of television. Studies have consistently found that while reading a newspaper has a substantial impact on people's knowledge of politics, television has little or no effect (Smith, *Unchanging American Voter*, 186). People's ability to recall what they have seen on network news broadcasts is often quite limited (see W. Russell Neuman, "Patterns of Recall among Television News Viewers," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 40 [Spring 1976]: 115–23). To the extent that people have become more reliant on television for their news (Roper Organization, *Trends in Attitudes toward Television and Other Media: A Twenty-Four Year Review* [New York: Television Information Office, 1983], but also see the useful cautionary remarks in W. Russell Neuman, *The Paradox of Mass Politics: Knowledge and Opinion in the American Electorate* [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1986], 139–45), they may actually be learning less about Washington political relations. They may, as Kernell claims, be exposed to more messages about the president than ever before, but the increase in the number of messages may be offset by a decrease in the informational content of those messages.

Moreover, though the total amount of information available about Washington may have increased, that does not mean that people are utilizing this increased information. As Eric Smith concludes, looking at data spanning from 1956 to 1976, "Total media use did not change. . . . Instead there was a change in the mix of media that people used to follow politics" (*Unchanging American Voter*, 184–85). The cable communications explosion of the 1980s has meant people can watch news twenty-four hours a day and can follow congressional floor debates and committee hearings almost around the clock. But the growth of cable also means people have more opportunities to watch movies, music videos, sitcoms, and sports. As W. Russell Neuman points out, the net result of more viewing options will be that "the proportion of news viewing will actually go down" (*Paradox of Mass Politics*, 139).

Several scholars have suggested that declining political interest may be the culprit behind the absence of improvement, despite increasing education levels, in public awareness of political relations in Washington (Bennett, "Trends in Americans' Political Information"; Bennett, "Know-nothings Revisited: The Meaning of Political Ignorance Today," *Social Science Quarterly* 69 [June 1988]: 476–90; Neuman, *Paradox of Mass Politics*; and Carpini and Keeter, "U.S. Public's Knowledge of Politics," 607). In 1987, 23 percent of the public said they were very interested in "politics and national affairs," and 34 percent said they were not at all or only slightly interested in politics. In contrast, in 1967, 35 percent described themselves as very interested, and only 27 percent said they were not at all or only slightly interested. Lack of interest, Stephen Earl Bennett explains, "reduces motivation to take in and retain political information" ("Trends in Americans' Political Information," 433).


27. 1986 National Election Study. Data graciously provided by Stephen Earl Bennett. In a Gallup poll taken in the summer of 1985, 24 percent were able to correctly identify Weinberger from a photograph shown to them (June 22–July 13, 1985).


29. AIP0-593, January 2–7, 1958. Also see AIP0-561, March 8–13, 1956. Interestingly, the approval rates were roughly equal among farmers and the general public (29 and 28 percent respectively). The difference lay in the disapproval rates, which reached 48 percent among farmers compared with only 29 percent among the general public.

30. Farmers were much more likely to have an opinion about the administration's price-support policies. Asked in 1954 whether they were "satisfied or dissatisfied with the way the Republican Administration is handling the problem of farm prices and farm price supports," 21 percent of farmers expressed no opinion as opposed to 39 percent of urban residents (Survey no. 535, August 5–10, 1954, *Gallup Poll, 2:1267*). Repeating the question again in 1955, Gallup found that 35 percent of nonfarmers had no opinion, as compared with only 14 percent of farmers (Survey no. 557, December 8–13, 1955, *Gallup Poll, 2:1392*).

31. This according to Jack Bell, at the time Senate correspondent and chief political reporter for the Associated Press (Bell, Oral History-167, COHP, EL, 15).

32. In the first months of the Clinton administration, Jerry Lewis, Republican representative from California, advised his fellow Republicans not to "take the president on personally" (Kenneth J. Cooper and Kevin Merida, "Republicans Strategize to Get Their Message Out," *Washington Post National Weekly Edition*, March 8–14, 1993, 15). And Republican strategist Ed Rollins counseled Republicans to "just hold [Clinton's] coat. . . Wish him well for the good of the country. And the moment he falters, be prepared to put the kick in his side on the way down" (David Van Drehle, "In the Big Game of Politics, Clinton is a Winner—So Far," *Washington Post National Weekly Edition*, April 5–11, 1993, 14).


34. Gallup, August 3–6, 1973. Similarly, 28 percent said they had never heard of John Ehrlichman.


37. AIP0-593, January 2–7, 1958. In Benson's case, 55 percent of the general public (compared with about 75 percent of farmers) and in Dulles's case close to two-
thirds of the public had an opinion about the president as well as the secretary in question. These data are more fully reported in Chapters 2 and 5.

38. Shanto Iyengar and Donald R. Kinder's *News That Matters* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987) is a model of the type of research that needs to be done in this area.


43. Thomas E. Cronin, among others, underestimates this incompatibility when he advises presidents to "claim credit when things go right and decentralize blame" (*The State of the Presidency*, 2d ed. [Boston: Little, Brown, 1980], 112).

44. Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, *Lyndon B. Johnson: The Exercise of Power* (New York: Signet, 1966), 473. Eisenhower, in contrast, often seemed uncomfortable being the center of public attention. Eisenhower, recalls Emmet John Hughes, was "averse . . . to solitary appearances requiring . . . people 'just to look at my face' " and much preferred public appearances in which he (literally) shared the stage with other members of his administration (*The Ordeal of Power: A Political Memoir of the Eisenhower Years* [New York: Atheneum, 1963], 258).

45. Nixon, particularly as his term wore on, also expressed dissatisfaction about being upstaged by other members of his administration. After the 1972 election, for instance, Nixon decided to take control of intergovernmental affairs away from Agnew, reasoning that "he'll just take the gravy and leave the President all the negatives and the problems" (John Ehrlichman, *Witness to Power: The Nixon Years* [New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982], 142). On Nixon's resentment of Kissinger's positive press, see ibid., 247; Henry Kissinger, *The White House Years* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1979), 918, 1408–10, 1424, 1455; Henry Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1982), 770–71; and Barry M. Goldwater with Jack Casserly, *Goldwater* (New York: Doubleday, 1988), 270. Nelson Polsby contrasts Nixon's first cabinet, which was a "reasonably visible group," with his subsequent appointments, who were increasingly "people of no independent public standing" ("Presidential Cabinet-Making: Lessons for the Political System," *Political Science Quarterly* 93 [Spring 1978]: 15–16).

46. David Halberstam, "The Very Expensive Education of McGeorge Bundy," *Harpers*, July 1969, 36. Several years later Bundy told a group of *Time* editors, "The
worst thing you could do with Lyndon Johnson was to go public with something, which with Lyndon Johnson meant anyone but himself" (ibid.). Cited in Polsby, Congress and the Presidency, 232 n97.


48. Califano to the president, December 6, 1968, quoted in Berman, "Johnson and the White House Staff," 191. Also see Sidey, Personal Presidency, 252–53.


50. Don Paarlberg, Oral History-52, January 17, 1968, COHP, EL, 27. Paarlberg worked as economic adviser to Benson in the Department of Agriculture until 1957 and then moved over to the White House to become the president's economic adviser (replacing Gabriel Hauge). Carl McCardle, assistant secretary of state for public affairs from 1953 to 1957, confirms that "once a decision was made, [Eisenhower] let others announce it" (Oral History-116, August 29, 1967, COHP, EL, 4).

51. Henry Cabot Lodge, As It Was: An Inside View of Politics and Power in the '50s and '60s (New York: Norton, 1976), 121. Also see Paarlberg, Oral History-52, 65. This is not a particularly original or exceptional idea in politics. Tip O'Neill quotes Sam Rayburn as saying, "There is no limit to the amount of good you can accomplish if you're willing to let somebody else take the credit" (Man of the House [New York: Random House, 1987], 150), and a sign on President Reagan's desk in the Oval Office read, "There is no limit to what a man can do or where he can go if he doesn't mind who gets the credit" (Cannon, Role of a Lifetime, 186).

52. Reagan's grasp of this truth was perhaps informed by his past career as a movie actor. John Sears, Reagan's one-time campaign manager, explained, "A lot of people in political and corporate life feel that delegating is an admission that there's something they can't do. But actors are surrounded by people with real authority—directors, producers, scriptwriters, cameramen, lighting engineers, and so on. Yet their authority doesn't detract from the actor's role. The star is the star. And if the show's a hit, he gets the credit" (Ann Reilly Dowd, "What Managers Can Learn from Manager Reagan," Fortune, September 15, 1986, 35; emphasis added). Sears's interpretation is more persuasive than Cannon's view that the sign on Reagan's desk referred to in the previous note reflected the fact that Reagan "did not consider himself a politician and really didn't mind who got the credit" (Cannon, Role of a Lifetime, 186).


55. Anderson, "Presidential Management of the Bureaucracy," 148. Agriculture Secretary Orville Freeman attested that he "felt the strong hand of the President in administrative detail, in economy, in government and a lot of things" (quoted in Schott and Hamilton, People, Positions, and Power, 56). In a similar vein, a middle-level bureaucrat told Stewart Alsop, "I know it's just my imagination but I have the feeling that the President is always just behind me, breathing down my neck" (Stewart Alsop, "The Johnsonization of Washington," Saturday Evening Post, February 26, 1966, 20).

56. The degree of discretion granted a cabinet member varied, of course, depend-
ing on the president’s knowledge of a policy area and his trust in the subordinate. At one extreme was Attorney General Brownell, who benefited from Eisenhower's trust as well as the president’s limited knowledge of legal matters. At the other end of the continuum was Defense Secretary Charles Wilson, who often found himself on a short leash both because of Eisenhower’s low opinion of Wilson’s judgment and because of the president’s extensive experience in the area of national defense. See Fred I. Greenstein, *The Hidden-Hand Presidency: Eisenhower as Leader* (New York: Basic Books, 1982), 83–86.


59. Richard Nixon often seemed unwilling to accept this trade-off. As John Ehrlichman explains, “Whenever discretion was granted to the Secretaries they failed to do things the way Richard Nixon wanted them done. Since Nixon was the one who had to go back to the people after four years, to explain why things had gone as they did, he reacted to their ‘failures’ by retaining almost all of the discretion” (*Witness to Power*, 112).


61. This characteristic of Eisenhower is accented in a recent biography by Piers Brendon. Eisenhower, Brendon writes, “was a palimpsest of conflicting views on which the latest impression was the clearest” (*Ike: His Life and Times* [New York: Harper and Row, 1986], 13). Brendon closes his book with two lines from Dryden’s “Absalom and Achitophel”:

   A man so various that he seem’d to be
   Not one, but all mankind’s epitome.

   The couplet would be more fitting if it did not continue:
   Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong;
   Was everything by starts, and nothing long;
   But in the course of one revolving moon
   Was chemist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon.


63. Hughes, *Ordeal of Power*, 105, 344; also see 147.

64. Ibid., 173.

65. E. Frederic Morrow, Oral History-92, January 31, 1968, COHP, EL. In a later interview, Morrow revealed that he “had a relationship with [Eisenhower] that was . . . just a beautiful thing. The problem was that most of his close friends were from the deep South.” Eisenhower explained to Morrow that his earlier opposition to racial integration in the army had been because he had unwittingly followed the advice


67. According to Larry Speakes, the phrase was coined by James Watt (Speakes, Speaking Out: The Reagan Presidency from inside the White House [New York: Scribners, 1988], 84).


69. This is not to suggest that these environmental conditions are entirely outside of a president's control. Neither expectations nor polarization are set in stone. Elite polarization is in part a product of the policies that a president pursues. Arguably, for instance, Reagan contributed to the greater polarization of the 1980s (see Martin P. Wattenberg, "The Reagan Polarization Phenomenon and the Continuing Downward Slide in Presidential Candidate Popularity," American Politics Quarterly 14 [July 1986]: 219–45), just as Eisenhower's middle-of-the-road policies probably helped dampen polarization in the 1950s, especially in foreign policy (Edwards, At the Margins, 66–67). Similarly, part of politics is altering expectations about who is responsible for what. A president's behavior can play a significant role in shaping the expectations that people harbor about presidential responsibility. By claiming credit for everything that happens in government, a president runs the risk of expanding those policy areas for which the public—mass or elite—holds him accountable. By the same token, a president may (within limits) be able to redefine expectations of presidential involvement and control downward. Bruce Buchanan suggests, for instance, that "Reagan's distancing taught the public and the media to expect less of him and more of his underlings" (Bruce Buchanan, The Citizen's Presidency [Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, 1987], 128). But though presidents may succeed in educating citizens to lower their expectations or in lowering the extent of polarization in society, presidents can only expect to alter these forces at the margins; much of it must be taken as a given.

70. Greenstein, Hidden-Hand Presidency, 231. Also useful is Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May's reminder that the notion that the Truman and Eisenhower period was characterized by a lack of conflict in foreign policy is "almost pure fantasy." "The years from 1945 to 1960 saw bitter, partisan, and utterly consensus-free debate about the 'loss' of China, the long-term stationing of troops in Europe, the limiting of warfare in Korea, and whether a new war ought to be risked for Dien Bien Phu or Quemoy and the Matsus. Democrats blamed Eisenhower for what happened in Latin America, whether it was dictatorships replacing democracies or, as in Cuba, Communists replacing dictators. Over recognizing Israel in 1948 and the Suez affair of 1956 there was also little accord" (Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision-Makers [New York: Free Press, 1986], 258–59).

71. Edwards, At the Margins, 59–63. A "key vote," as selected by Congressional Quarterly, "is one or more of the following: a matter of major controversy, a test of presidential or political power, and a decision of potentially great impact on the na-
tion and on lives of Americans" (23). The other measure used in Table 8.1, non-unanimous support, includes all votes on which the winning side numbered less than 80 percent of those who voted (21-22).

72. Two important caveats need to be mentioned here. First, Eisenhower's more "liberal" foreign policies (see Richard Fleisher and Jon R. Bond, "Are There Two Presidencies? Yes, But only for Republicans," in Steven A. Shull, ed., The Two Presidencies: A Quarter Century Assessment [Chicago: Nelson-Hall Publishers, 1991], 132) must get a substantial share of the credit for this low level of polarization. Had Robert Taft gained the presidency in 1952, foreign-policy polarization would no doubt have been substantially higher. Second, by ending with Reagan the data may overstate the secular increase in polarization. With the end of the cold war, there are indications that some of the ingrained left-right alignments in foreign policy may have broken down, e.g., whether to intervene in Bosnia.


74. Ibid., 411-12.


76. No scholarship that I am aware of has systematically compared the extent of issue polarization among 1956 convention delegates and more recent convention delegates. The best systematic study we have that speaks to the question of changes in polarization over time among convention delegates is the work of Warren E. Miller and M. Kent Jennings, but it is limited to change since 1972. In Parties in Transition, Miller and Jennings compare convention delegates from 1972, 1976, and 1980 and find evidence of a "widening gulf between the parties during the 1970s" (161). "Party elites always diverge in their opinion cultures," Miller and Jennings concede, "but the gap opened up between 1972 and 1980 was truly remarkable" (176), a conclusion based not on changes in issue positions but rather on changes in attitudes toward groups such as union leaders, blacks, business interests, the women's liberation movement, conservatives, and liberals. In a follow-up study comparing 1980 and 1984 convention delegates, Miller documents that "the first four years of the Reagan presidency produced a visible extension of the ideological polarization of the parties that had taken place during the later 1970s" (Without Consent: Mass-Elite Linkages in Presidential Politics [Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1988], 16).

77. This 1984 data is from the Center for Political Studies and is reported in Nelson W. Polsby and Aaron Wildavsky, Presidential Elections: Contemporary Strategies of American Electoral Politics, 8th ed. (New York: Free Press, 1991), 149.


79. I have omitted the other questions about policy preferences reported by Polsby and Wildavsky in Table 3.6 (Presidential Elections, 148) because these other questions did not share the same basic structure (increase/decrease/remain as is) as the McClosky questions.

80. Moreover, most of the issues have changed and the wording of the questions is not exactly the same. Three issues (though not the exact questions) are the same. Each of the three issues—federal aid to education, social security, and foreign aid—that were asked about in both the 1956 and 1984 surveys showed evidence of increas-
ing polarization, although in the case of social security and foreign aid these increases were slight and in the case of foreign aid neither survey showed much in the way of polarization (all sides favor reducing it). In reporting the 1984 data, Polsby and Wildavsky write that “even social security, which for years was uncontested between the parties . . . reveals large differences” (Presidential Elections, 147). The 1956 data would seem to suggest, however, that social security was far from uncontested in the 1950s.

81. Other studies, using different data bases, give further support to the thesis that the parties were more polarized in the 1980s than they used to be, although authors differ over whether this change is best described as “a modest, but significant, increase in interparty issue distance” (John A. Clark, John M. Bruce, John H. Kessel, and William G. Jacoby, “I’d Rather Switch than Fight: Lifelong Democrats and Converts to Republicanism among Campaign Activists,” American Journal of Political Science 35 [August 1991]: 594) or whether these changes are better described as “fundamental” (Aaron Wildavsky, “Are American Political Parties Pretty Much the Same as They Used to Be in the 1950s, Only a Little Different, or Are They Radically Different? A Review Essay,” Journal of Policy History 4 [1992]: 228). Wildavsky relies heavily on the dramatic evidence of change between 1978 and 1988 presented in Lynda W. Powell, “Changes in Liberalism-Conservatism in the U.S. House of Representatives, 1978–1988” (Paper prepared for the 1991 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D.C., August 29–September 1, 1991).

82. Polsby and Wildavsky, Presidential Elections, 158.

83. McClosky et al., “Issue Conflict and Consensus,” 412. The difference between the Democratic and Republican “support ratios” among the mass public was .15 for level of farm price supports, .12 for government regulation of business, .10 for taxes on large incomes, and less than .10 for every other issue.

84. On Bush’s admiration for Eisenhower, see New York Times, January 21, 1989, A9. That Bush tried to emulate Eisenhower’s style is not to say that he succeeded. If Eisenhower was often more engaged than he appeared, Bush was often less engaged than he seemed. His hyperactive personality seemed to indicate a “hands-on” method of operating, but Bush’s lack of patience for complex policy issues often meant he was anything but hands-on. His often frenetic energy level left many observers predicting trouble for Bush from the outset. “If Reagan was Teflon, Bush is a cast-iron skillet,” said one friend. “It will take a week of soaking to get that egg out” (New York Times, January 21, 1989, A9). And Jonathan Alter wrote that “Bush’s brand of activism has its more prosaic political hazards as well. One of the cruel ironies of modern governance is that engaged, accountable presidents tend to be more vulnerable to criticism than detached, aloof ones, as the contrasting experiences of Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan show” (“Bush Reaches Out,” Newsweek, January 30, 1989, 24).


86. Greenstein, Hidden-Hand Presidency, 239.


89. During the 1992 campaign Bill Clinton seemed to have a clear sense of where
he wanted to take the Democratic party but seemed to lose sight of this vision in his first months in office.

90. Lincoln, though often cloaking his positions in ambiguity, never lost sight of his chief objectives—winning the war, ending slavery, and transforming the fledgling Republican party into the dominant party in the nation.

91. Bush's average approval score was kindly provided to me by George Edwards. Approval scores for Reagan, Eisenhower, and Kennedy are from Edwards, Presidential Approval, 156.

92. Reagan's reputation as a "Teflon president," who by "a strange kind of alchemy" avoided responsibility for his administration's actions (Jane Mayer and Doyle McManus, Landslide: The Unmaking of the President, 1984–1988 [Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1988], 12–13), is greatly exaggerated. Reagan's average approval for his eight years (52 percent) is not overwhelmingly better than the average approval scores of Nixon (48 percent), Ford (47 percent), and Carter (47 percent), and is significantly lower than the average approval scores of Kennedy (71 percent), Eisenhower (65 percent), Bush (61 percent), and Johnson (56 percent) (Edwards, Presidential Approval, 156, 175). And as D. Roderic Kiewiet and Douglas Rivers show, Reagan's popularity closely mirrored the state of the economy throughout his first term ("The Economic Basis of Reagan's Appeal," in John E. Chubb and Paul E. Peterson, eds., The New Direction in American Politics [Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1985], 69–90).

Reagan's extraordinary likability as a person is also greatly exaggerated. It is true that many more people liked Reagan as a person than approved of his performance. On the average, the difference between approval of Reagan as a person and approval of his performance as president was 21 percentage points. But much the same discrepancy between evaluation of the person and the job performance was true of Carter. In a July 1978 poll, for instance, Carter's approval rating lagged at 39 percent while 76 percent felt he was a "likeable person." According to Edwards, Reagan was actually among "the least well-liked presidents of the past three decades" (Edwards, Presidential Approval, 131–32; also see George C. Edwards III, "Comparing Chief Executives," Public Opinion [June/July 1985]: 51).


96. A 1979 Gallup poll found 73 percent of the public agreeing that the public's expectations of the president are higher than in the past (Edwards, Public Presidency, 191).


98. In a recent essay, Robert DiClerico writes that "the public's expectations of presidential leadership are high and appear to be growing" ("The Role of Media in Heightened Expectations and Diminished Leadership Capacity," in Waterman, Presidency Reconsidered, 119). DiClerico, however, offers no evidence that public expec-
tations "appear to be growing," only a footnote referring to George Edwards's *Public Presidency*. On the cited page of Edwards's volume, one finds repeated the claim that "the public's expectations of the president's public and private behavior, his style of leadership, and his policy performance are high and appear to be climbing" (*Public Presidency*, 188). But while Edwards's discussion makes excellent use of a specially commissioned 1979 Gallup poll designed to tap public expectations of presidential performance, Edwards provides no evidence that speaks to the question of change over time. DiClerico does make use of indirect evidence drawn from analyses of media coverage of the presidency, but the evidence from these studies is much less conclusive than DiClerico suggests. See the Appendix for a discussion of this evidence.


101. Wayne, "Expectations of the President," 20. The 1979 survey was conducted by Gallup in the fall of that year.


103. Roberta S. Sigel, "Image of the American Presidency: Part II of an Exploration into Popular Views of Presidential Power," in Aaron Wildavsky, ed., *The Presidency* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1969), 296–309. The exact question wording was, "Now, which of the two statements comes closest to your own ideas: 'The President is an inspired leader; he has ideas of his own how to help the country. He should be able to make the people and Congress work along with him.' Or 'It is up to the people through their Congressman to find solutions to the problems of the day. The President should stick to carrying out what the people and Congress have decided.'" Sigel found 51.5 percent preferring the first statement and 40 percent preferring the second statement (299–300, 302).


105. Gary C. Jacobson, *The Electoral Origins of Divided Government: Competition in U.S. House Elections, 1946–1988* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1990), 118. Interestingly, too, a poll conducted at the beginning of 1986 showed that 59 percent thought Congress would "make better decisions about what to do to reduce the federal deficit" than Reagan would. Only 29 percent felt Reagan would do better. Asked whether they thought the budget would be balanced within five years, 77 percent said no. Moreover, of those who felt it would not be balanced in the next five years, 45 percent felt that such a failure would be Congress's fault and only 19 percent said it would the president's fault. Twenty-six percent said the president and Congress would be jointly responsible for such a failure.


111. Truman’s average approval score of 44 percent is followed by Ford (47 percent), Carter (47 percent), Nixon (48 percent), Reagan (52 percent), Johnson (56 percent), Bush (61 percent), Eisenhower (65 percent), and Kennedy (71 percent). Approval scores for Eisenhower through Reagan are taken from Edwards, *Presidential Approval*, 156. Bush’s average approval score was provided by George Edwards. Truman’s average approval score is calculated from approval scores compiled in King and Ragsdale, *Elusive Executive*, 293-94, 295. Because so many fewer approval questions were asked in Truman’s first term (13) than in his second term (29), I have averaged the sum of the first (52 percent) and second term averages (36 percent) in arriving at Truman’s average approval score. The Eisenhower through Bush approval scores are an average of every opinion question asked by Gallup for each of these presidents.


115. Chief among these, as Greenstein acknowledges, is that Eisenhower’s style is “not suited to effecting major political change” (*Hidden-Hand Presidency*, 230).


118. Premodern treasury secretaries did more often fill such a role. On Alexander Hamilton and Salmon Chase as lightning rods for Presidents Washington and Lin-
coin respectively, see Ellis and Wildavsky, *Dilemmas of Presidential Leadership*, 43, 184.


120. A few scholars have praised this trend toward greater centralization as enhancing the institutional capacities of presidents and enhancing bureaucratic responsiveness to electoral preferences (Moe, "Politicized Presidency," esp. 268, 271); more scholars have bemoaned it for overburdening an already overburdened president and undermining the institutional integrity and independence of executive agencies and departments (Lowi, *Personal President*; Stephen Hess, *Organizing the Presidency* [Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1976]).

121. Some will argue that democratic government demands that the president, as the only elected executive official, make his preferences felt across and throughout the bureaucracy. There is something to this view, but it errs in assuming that the president has received an electoral mandate on every issue on which he has a preference. It is not just possible but inevitable that a president will get elected despite holding opinions on a range of issues that a majority disagrees with (see sources cited in Chapter 3, note 21). If presidential elections are not about the public endorsing specific policies, the case is strengthened for a more minimalist president who focuses on a few core preferences rather than a president who actively pursues his personal preferences across the entire range of governmental policies.

122. At a point when President Carter's approval score had fallen to 32 percent and his disapproval had reached 54 percent (King and Ragsdale, *Elusive Executive*, 304), Rosalynn Carter's approval score stayed up at 59 percent, while only 19 percent disapproved of her performance (*Gallup Opinion Index*, Report no. 170, September 1979, 6). An April 1987 poll found that 58 percent approved of Nancy Reagan's handling of her job, while only 23 percent disapproved (*Gallup Report*, no. 258, March 1987, 29); the same poll showed President Reagan with a 48 percent approval rating and a 43 percent disapproval rating (Edwards, *Presidential Approval*, 108). In August 1992, Barbara Bush had an 81 percent favorable (and 12 percent unfavorable) rating compared with a 50 percent favorable (and 47 percent unfavorable) rating for President Bush (*The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion 1992* [Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources], 149).

123. In terms of the fourfold typology introduced in Chapter 1, presidential wives, when they are seen as politically relevant at all, are usually seen as assets, adding luster to the president's public standing. So, for example, a Harris press release reported that Betty Ford "is obviously well regarded by most of the public and must be viewed as an asset to the President" (Harris Survey press release, September 25, 1975). Similar comments were legion about Barbara Bush during the 1992 campaign. Ann McDaniel of *Newsweek*, to take but one example, wrote that "there is not much doubt that Bush is hoping that his wife's popularity will help his flagging image. She is, some would say, his only remaining asset" ("Barbara Bush: The Steel behind the Smile," *Newsweek*, June 22, 1992, 36).


125. See, for example, *The New Republic*, especially columns by Mickey Kaus and Fred Barnes.


128. Only Dick Cheney and Jim Baker have gone on to have political careers after serving as chief of staff. And only Cheney has ever been elected to a political office
after serving as chief of staff. This is not surprising since not only do chiefs of staff make a lot of enemies, they are also often selected on the basis of their selflessness and lack of political ambitions.

129. On Eisenhower's desire for "selflessness" in a chief of staff, see Richard M. Nixon, *The Memoirs of Richard Nixon* (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1978), 198-99. Among the things President Reagan was reported to have liked about the idea of Regan as chief of staff "was that [Regan] had no further political ambitions and no personal agenda" (*New York Times*, January 11, 1985, 14).

130. Light, *Vice-Presidential Power*, 255.

131. Woodrow Wilson, *Congressional Government* (Cleveland: Meridan, 1956; originally published in 1885), 185-87. Also see Wilson, "The Study of Administration," *Political Science Quarterly* 56 (December 1941; originally published in 1887): 481-506, esp. 497-99. One could, with equal justice, trace the concern for concentrating power and responsibility in a single head to Alexander Hamilton's Federalist Paper no. 70. In it, Hamilton argued against "a multiplication of the Executive"—"either by vesting power in two or more magistrates of equal dignity and authority; or by vesting it ostensibly in one man, subject, in whole or in part, to the control and cooperation of others, in the capacity of counsellors to him"—on the grounds that "it tends to conceal faults and destroy responsibility." When the unity of the executive is destroyed, Hamilton maintained, "it often becomes impossible amidst mutual accusation, to determine on whom the blame or the punishment of a pernicious measure, or series of pernicious measures, ought really to fall. It is shifted from one to another with so much dexterity, and under such plausible appearances, that the public opinion is left in suspense about the real author" (*The Federalist* [New York: Modern Library, n.d.], 459). In contrast to Wilson, however, Hamilton argued that the system set up under the new Constitution *avoided* these faults.


144. Also relevant is Judith Shklar, "Let Us Not Be Hypocritical," Daedalus 108 (Summer 1979): 1–25.


146. This point is made in Nelson W. Polsby and Aaron Wildavsky, Presidential Elections, 6th ed. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1984), 265–66.


148. See the comments to this effect in Oldfield and Wildavsky, "Reconsidering the Two Presidencies," 190.


151. See, e.g., Neustadt, Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents, 10.

152. Similar is Lowi's suggestion that "since building up the presidency has not met the problem of presidential capacity to govern, the time has come to consider building it down" (Lowi, Personal President, 208).

153. Grossman and Kumar, Portraying the President, 265.

154. Stephen Hess proposes that we redefine "the tasks of Presidents [as] those activities that they must perform and that cannot be performed by others. The corollary is that the many other tasks currently performed badly by presidents must be performed elsewhere." Presidents, Hess contends, "have made a serious mistake, starting with Roosevelt, in asserting that they are the chief managers of the federal government . . . . Rather than chief manager, the President is chief political officer of the United States. His major responsibility, in my judgment, is to . . . make a relatively small number of highly significant political decisions" (Organizing the Presidency, 10–11). Also see Aaron Wildavsky, "President Reagan as a Political Strategist," in Charles O. Jones, ed., The Reagan Legacy: Promise and Performance [Chatham, N.J.: Chatham House, 1988], 289–305.

APPENDIX


2. Cornwell, "Presidential News," 318. Cornwell selected out six sample weeks in each of the years he studied.

3. Balutis also examined the Buffalo Evening News and here found evidence of an
increase in attention to presidential news, from an average of 327 column inches of front-page coverage in the years 1958-1960 to 496 column inches in 1961-1968 to 566 column inches in 1969-1973. These averages are calculated from Table 1 in Balutis, "Congress, the President and the Press," 511.

4. Coding procedures are explained in Cornwell, "Presidential News," 312-13; and Balutis, "Congress, the President and the Press," 510-11.

5. Stephen Hess, The Washington Reporters (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1981), 98. Hess did find that the president appears in the headlines more often than the Congress, but he also found that of stories with neither Congress nor the president in the headlines, many more are about Congress.


7. Samuel Kernell updated Grossman and Kumar's study through 1983 and found that for the Times Reagan's coverage was actually lower than Carter's and not significantly higher than Kennedy's. Only for Time magazine does Kernell's data show a relatively steady upward climb that continues into the Reagan era. Kernell altered the study somewhat by including only the second and third years of a president's first term in his analysis (Going Public: New Strategies of Presidential Leadership [Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, 1986], 180-81).

8. Nor, if we take Hess's comprehensive survey seriously, does it support the thesis that there is a massive imbalance in attention given to the presidency relative to Congress. Also see Susan Miller, "News Coverage of Congress: The Search for the Ultimate Spokesman," Journalism Quarterly 54 (Autumn 1977): 461.


10. Data gathered by Herbert Gans in a content analysis of Newsweek magazine for the years 1967, 1971, and 1975 indicated a progressive increase in the percentage of column inches in the magazine devoted to incumbent presidents (from 12 to 20 to 23 percent). Also suggestive but difficult to interpret was the finding that the percentage of column inches in the magazine devoted to members of the House and Senate dropped from 10 in 1968 and 12 in 1971 to 4 in 1975. Without more data points it is impossible to say whether 1975 is part of a trend or an atypical year. See Herbert J. Gans, Deciding What's News (New York: Pantheon, 1979), 10. Newsweek and Time's concentration on the presidency is also confirmed by Bruce Miroff's finding from the mid-1970s that more than half to almost two-thirds of lead stories "dealt primarily with presidential activities" ("Monopolizing the Public Space: The President as a Problem for Democratic Politics," in Thomas E. Cronin, ed., Rethinking the Presidency [Boston: Little, Brown, 1982], 221).

11. This is a particular problem with John Orman's "Covering the American Presidency: Valenced Reporting in the Periodical Press, 1900-1982," Presidential Studies Quarterly 14 (Summer 1984): 382. Orman examined The Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature and found a steady and dramatic increase in the number of presidential stories over time. But without some measure of the ratio of presidential to congressional news, it is unclear how much of this increase is attributable either to an overall growth in attention to national news or to a proliferation of periodical magazines.

12. Robert E. Gilbert, "President versus Congress: The Struggle for Public Atten-
tion,” *Congress and the Presidency* 16 (Autumn 1989): 86, 87. Michael J. Robinson and Margaret A. Sheehan found that close to 60 percent of all the lead stories on CBS network news during the 1980 campaign involved the presidency (*Over the Wire and on TV: CBS and UPI in Campaign '80* [New York: Russell Sage, 1983], 192).

13. Hess, *Washington Reporters*, 98. Hess analyzed all three networks for one week in 1978. Michael J. Robinson and Margaret A. Sheehan compared CBS network news with UPI in 1980 and found that as a percentage of all news stories CBS paid almost twice as much attention to the White House as did the wire service, although on stories not connected to the campaign the gap was considerably smaller (*Over the Wire and on TV*, 191–92). A discordant note is introduced by Herbert Gans, who compared CBS network news and *Newsweek* magazine for 1967 and found that television actually gave more coverage to members of Congress (17 percent of the 918 television stories about “known” leaders) than to the incumbent president (11 percent) whereas the news magazine gave slightly greater coverage to the incumbent president (12 percent of column inches about “knowns”) than to members of Congress (10 percent). See Gans, *Deciding What's News*, 10.


15. Ibid.

16. And few studies are likely to since the Television News Archives at Vanderbilt University, the data base that most scholars use, has film beginning in August 1968.

17. Polls conducted by the Roper organization show a steady increase in the public's reliance on television news, from 51 percent in 1959 to 65 percent in 1974. During the same time, newspapers have steadily declined as the public's primary news source, from 57 percent to 47 percent in 1974. The question Roper asks is, “First, I'd like to ask you where you usually get most of your news about what's going on in the world today—from the newspapers or radio or television or magazines or talking to other people or where?” Respondents were allowed to name more than one source. This and other relevant data are reported in Smith, *Changing American Voter*, 181.
