

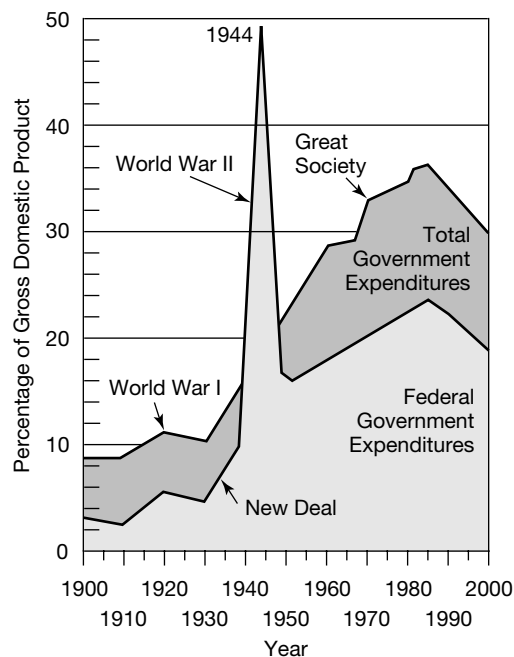
The Governing Circles

If there ever was a time when the powers of government were limited—when government did no more than secure law and order, protect individual liberty and property, enforce contracts, and defend against foreign invasion—that time has long passed. Today it is commonplace to observe that governmental institutions intervene in every aspect of our lives—from the “cradle to the grave.” Government in America has the primary responsibility for providing insurance against old age, death, dependency, disability, and unemployment; for organizing the nation’s health-care system; for providing education at the elementary, secondary, collegiate, and postgraduate levels; for providing public highways and regulating water, rail, and air transportation; for providing police and fire protection; for providing sanitation services and sewage disposal; for financing research in medicine, science, and technology; for delivering the mail; for exploring outer space; for maintaining parks and recreation; for providing housing and adequate food for the poor; for providing job training and manpower programs; for cleaning the air and water; for rebuilding central cities; for maintaining full employment and a stable money supply; for regulating business practices and labor relations; for eliminating racial and sexual discrimination. Indeed, the list of government responsibilities seems endless, yet each year we manage to find additional tasks for government to do.

THE CONCENTRATION OF GOVERNMENTAL POWER

Government in the United States grew enormously throughout most of the twentieth century, both in absolute terms and in relation to the size of the national economy. The size of the economy is usually measured by the gross domestic product (GDP), the dollar sum of all the goods and services produced in the United States in a year. Governments accounted for only about 8 percent of the GDP at the beginning of the century, and most governmental activities were carried out by state and local governments. Two world wars, the New Deal programs devised during the Great Depression of the 1930s, and the growth of the Great Society programs of the 1960s and 1970s all greatly expanded the size of government, particularly the federal government. The rise in government growth relative to the economy leveled off during the Reagan presidency (1981–89), and no large new programs were undertaken in the Bush and Clinton years. An economic boom in the 1990s caused the GDP to grow rapidly, while government spending grew only moderately. The result was a modest *decline* in governmental size in relation to the economy. Today, federal expenditures amount to about 20 percent of GDP, and total governmental expenditures are about 30 percent of GDP (see Figure 4–1).

FIGURE 4–1 The Growth of Government



Source: Budget of the United States Government, 2000.

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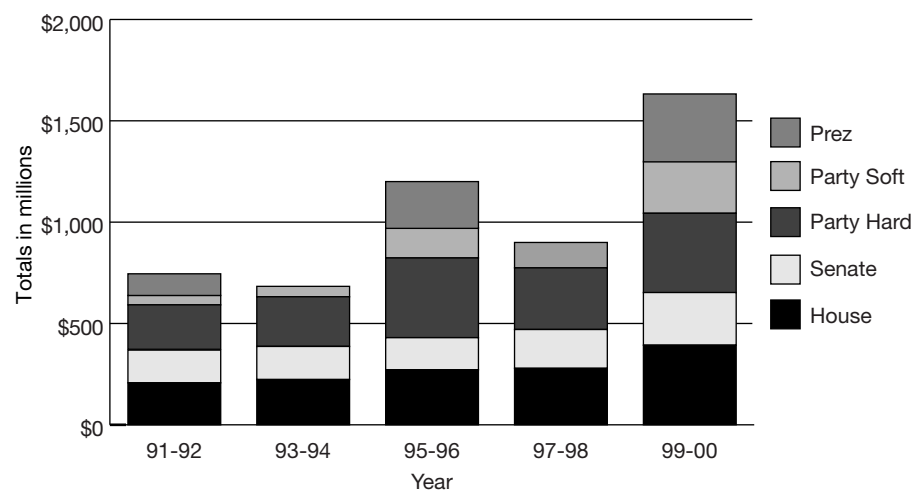
Not everything that government does is reflected in governmental expenditures. *Regulatory activity*, for example, especially environmental regulations, imposes significant costs on individuals and businesses; these costs are not shown in government budgets.

We have defined our governmental elite as the top executive, congressional, and judicial officers of the *federal* government; the President and Vice-President; secretaries, undersecretaries, and assistant secretaries of executive departments; senior White House presidential advisers; congressional committee chairpersons and ranking minority members; congressional majority and minority party leaders in the House and Senate; Supreme Court Justices; and members of the Federal Reserve Board and the Council of Economic Advisers. And we add to this definition of political elites the “fat cat” contributors who keep them in power.

THE FAT CAT CONTRIBUTORS

More money was spent on political campaigning in 2000 than in any election year in American history. An estimated \$3 billion was spent by all presidential and congressional candidates, Democratic and Republican parties, political action committees sponsored by interest groups, and independent political organizations in federal, state, and local elections combined. The costs of elections rises in each election cycle (see Figure 4–2). The largest increases in campaign finance came not from regulated “hard money” contributions to candidates, but rather from large unregulated “soft money” contributions to the parties.

FIGURE 4–2 Campaign Fund Raising, President and Congress



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Virtually all of the top “fat cat” campaign contributors from the *corporate, banking, and investment* worlds have been previously listed among the nation’s largest corporate (Chapter 2) and monied (Chapter 3) institutions. AT&T, Philip Morris, Citigroup, and Goldman Sachs regularly appear each election cycle among contributors of \$2 to \$3 million or more (see Table 4–1). One notable newcomer among top corporate “fat cat” contributors in 2000 is Bill Gates’s Microsoft Corporation. In the past, Gates tried to avoid politics altogether; Microsoft was notably absent from previous lists of top campaign contributors. But Gates learned a hard lesson when Clinton’s Justice Department under Attorney General Janet Reno launched its costly antitrust suit against Microsoft. (See “The New Tycoons” in Chapter 7.)

While contributions from the corporate, banking, and investment institutions are usually divided between the parties (albeit weighted toward Republicans), contributions from *unions* are almost exclusively directed toward Democrats. Indeed, union contributions are the single largest source of campaign money for the Democratic Party, followed by contributions from Hollywood’s entertainment industry.

Contributions from wealthy individuals failed to match institutional contributions. While more than 100 institutions contributed \$1 million or more in 2000, only two individuals contributed over this amount. (Peter Butenwieser of Butenwieser & Associates of Philadelphia and S. Daniel Abraham of Slim-Fast Foods both contributed over \$1 million to Democrats.)

Expenditures for congressional campaigns also reached a new high. The U.S. Senate race in New York, featuring former First Lady Hillary Clinton against relative newcomer Republican Rick Lazio, set a new combined spending record for congressional elections at more than \$85 million. A new individual congressional spending record of \$65 million was set by multibillionaire investment banker (Goldman Sacks) Democrat Jon Corzine, who dug into his own fortune to win a U.S. Senate seat from New Jersey.

The *average* candidate for a U.S. Senate seat raised and spent over \$5 million. And the *average* candidate for a U.S. House seat raised and spent about \$800,000. This means that the average incumbent member of Congress must raise about \$8,000 *per week*, every week of their term in office.

THE POLITICIANS: AMBITION AND OFFICE SEEKING

Ambition is the driving force in politics. Politics attracts people for whom power and celebrity are more rewarding than money, leisure, or privacy. “Political office today flows to those who want it enough to spend the time and energy mastering its pursuit. It flows in the direction of ambition—and talent.”¹

¹ Alan Ehrenhalt, *The United States of Ambition: Politicians’ Power and Pursuit of Office* (New York: Random House, 1991), p. 22.

TABLE 4-1 Fat Cat Campaign Contributors, 2000

Rank	Contributor	Total Contributions	To Dems.	To Repubs.
1	American Fedn. of St./Cnty./Munic. Employees	\$6,935,989	98%	2%
2	Service Employees International Union	\$4,961,010	95%	5%
3	AT&T	\$4,667,844	38%	61%
4	Microsoft Corp	\$4,309,856	46%	54%
5	Communications Workers of America	\$3,871,185	99%	0%
6	National Assn. of Realtors	\$3,834,600	41%	59%
7	Goldman Sachs Group	\$3,646,382	68%	32%
8	United Food & Commercial Workers Union	\$3,578,452	99%	1%
9	Intl. Brotherhood of Electrical Workers	\$3,561,860	97%	3%
10	Citigroup Inc.	\$3,559,566	53%	47%
11	Philip Morris	\$3,460,200	18%	81%
12	SBC Communications	\$3,418,466	46%	54%
13	Verizon Communications	\$3,357,420	36%	64%
14	Carpenters & Joiners Union	\$3,183,383	92%	8%
15	United Parcel Service	\$3,133,119	26%	73%
16	American Federation of Teachers	\$3,110,055	99%	1%
17	Assn. of Trial Lawyers of America	\$3,030,750	88%	12%
18	Laborers Union	\$2,929,275	93%	7%
19	National Rifle Assn.	\$2,885,377	8%	92%
20	MBNA America Bank	\$2,733,000	17%	83%
21	National Education Assn.	\$2,584,478	92%	7%
22	Sheet Metal Workers Union	\$2,551,584	99%	1%
23	Machinists/Aerospace Workers Union	\$2,546,138	99%	1%
24	Teamsters Union	\$2,517,240	93%	7%
25	Ernst & Young	\$2,497,761	42%	58%
26	National Auto Dealers Assn.	\$2,410,200	32%	68%
27	Federal Express Corp.	\$2,388,428	34%	66%
28	Enron Corp.	\$2,365,458	28%	72%
29	National Assn. of Home Builders	\$2,336,799	37%	63%
30	Lockheed Martin	\$2,333,794	39%	61%
31	Emily's List	\$2,328,840	100%	0%
32	Credit Suisse First Boston	\$2,325,705	29%	70%
33	Bristol-Myers Squibb	\$2,300,792	14%	86%
34	United Auto Workers	\$2,248,755	99%	0%
35	Morgan Stanley, Dean Witter & Co.	\$2,225,823	39%	60%
36	BellSouth Corp.	\$2,219,752	41%	59%
37	Freddie Mac	\$2,198,839	48%	52%
38	AFL-CIO	\$2,173,638	96%	4%
39	Global Crossing	\$2,142,386	50%	50%
40	Pfizer Inc.	\$2,136,647	14%	86%
41	Blue Cross/Blue Shield	\$2,125,552	27%	73%
42	American Medical Assn.	\$2,077,644	47%	52%
43	National beer Wholesalers Assn.	\$2,059,061	19%	80%
44	Bank of America	\$1,889,318	59%	40%
45	Time Warner	\$1,860,237	73%	27%
46	National Assn. of Letter Carriers	\$1,830,700	86%	13%
47	Union Pacific Corp	\$1,805,144	16%	84%
48	General Electric	\$1,793,879	39%	61%
49	Joseph E Seagram & Sons	\$1,791,060	62%	38%
50	Andersen Worldwide	\$1,781,412	29%	70%

continued

TABLE 4-1 continued

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Contributor</i>	<i>Total Contributions</i>	<i>To Dems.</i>	<i>To Repubs.</i>
51	Marine Engineers Union	\$1,776,082	60%	40%
52	Deloitte & Touche	\$1,761,826	29%	71%
53	American Online	\$1,724,286	50%	50%
54	AFLAC Inc.	\$1,716,010	45%	55%
55	Merrill Lynch	\$1,713,377	34%	65%
56	American Bankers Assn.	\$1,677,707	35%	65%
57	Pricewaterhouse Coopers	\$1,677,281	26%	74%
58	Anheuser-Busch	\$1,656,525	49%	51%
59	Credit Union National Assn.	\$1,649,439	47%	53%
60	Boeing Co.	\$1,624,958	43%	57%
61	WorldCom Inc.	\$1,607,681	32%	68%
62	American Hospital Assn.	\$1,601,769	50%	49%
63	Prudential Insurance	\$1,576,150	45%	54%
64	Fannie Mae	\$1,558,357	54%	46%
65	Walt Disney Co.	\$1,547,189	59%	41%
66	Eli Lilly & Co.	\$1,539,285	19%	81%
67	Plumbers/Pipefitters Union	\$1,520,107	96%	3%
68	International Assn. of Fire Fighters	\$1,516,150	86%	14%
69	Lehman Brothers	\$1,512,700	30%	70%
70	Painters & Allied Trades Union	\$1,502,650	99%	1%
71	American International Group	\$1,491,662	47%	53%
72	Williams & Bailey	\$1,468,300	100%	0%
73	Glaxo Wellcome Inc.	\$1,461,758	12%	88%
74	UST Inc.	\$1,456,096	10%	89%
75	American Financial Group	\$1,442,105	33%	67%
76	Slim-Fast Foods	\$1,435,700	99%	1%
77	United Transportation Union	\$1,430,800	86%	14%
78	Paine Webber	\$1,418,900	33%	67%
79	Loral Spacecom	\$1,386,150	98%	2%
80	Mirage REsorts	\$1,377,656	44%	56%
81	Exxon Mobil Corp.	\$1,373,310	10%	89%
82	American Airlines	\$1,373,047	37%	62%
83	Ironworkers Union	\$1,351,915	91%	8%
84	American Dental Assn.	\$1,341,617	45%	55%
85	BP Amoco Corp.	\$1,341,264	30%	70%
86	Southern Co.	\$1,318,925	27%	73%
87	Saban Entertainment	\$1,318,400	100%	0%
88	United Steelworkers	\$1,285,050	98%	1%
89	US West Inc.	\$1,277,295	34%	66%
90	Bank One Corp.	\$1,249,158	34%	66%
91	Northwest Airlines	\$1,243,055	48%	51%
92	Chase Manhattan	\$1,239,519	47%	52%
93	KPMG LLP	\$1,211,464	30%	70%
94	Schering-Plough Corp.	\$1,192,576	24%	76%
95	Buttenwieser & Assoc.	\$1,186,500	100%	0%
96	Verner, Lipfert et al.	\$1,185,289	56%	43%
97	General Dynamics	\$1,184,705	40%	60%
98	Angelos Law Office/Baltimore Orioles	\$1,168,440	100%	0%
99	Limited Inc.	\$1,140,719	34%	66%
100	National Assn. of Convenience Stores	\$1,135,334	13%	87%

Source: Based on data released by the FEC, January 2, 2001.

Political ambition is the most distinguishing characteristic of elected officeholders. The people who run for and win public office are not necessarily the most intelligent, best informed, wealthiest, or most successful business or professional people. At all levels of the political system, from presidential candidates, members of Congress, governors and state legislators, to city councils and school board members, it is the most politically ambitious people who are willing to sacrifice time, family and private life, and energy and effort for the power and celebrity that comes with public office.

Politics is becoming increasingly professionalized. “Citizen-statesmen”—people with business or professional careers who get into politics part-time or for short periods of time—are being driven out of political life by career politicians—people who enter politics early in life as a full-time occupation and expect to make it their career. Politically ambitious young people seek out internships and staff positions with members of Congress, with congressional committees, in state legislators’ or governors’ offices, or mayors’ or council chambers. Others volunteer to work in political campaigns. Many find political mentors, as they learn how to organize campaigns, contact financial contributors, and deal with the media. By their early thirties, they are ready to run for local office or the state legislature. Rather than challenge a strong incumbent, they may wait for an open seat to be created by retirement, reapportionment, or its holder seeking another office. Or they may make an initial attempt against a strong incumbent of the opposition party in order to gain experience and win the appreciation of their own party’s supporters for a good effort. Over time, running for and holding elective office becomes their career. They work harder at it than anyone else, in part because they have no real private sector career to return to in case of defeat.

The prevalence of lawyers in politics is an American tradition. Among the nation’s Founders—the fifty-five delegates to the Constitutional Convention in 1787—some twenty-five were lawyers. The political dominance of lawyers is even greater today, with lawyers filling nearly two thirds of U.S. Senate seats and nearly half of the seats in the U.S. House of Representatives.

It is sometimes argued that lawyers dominate in politics because of the parallel skills required in law and politics. Lawyering is the representation of clients; a lawyer employs similar skills whether representing clients in private practice or representing constituents in Congress. Lawyers are trained to deal with statutory law, so they may at least know how to find United States Code (the codified laws of the United States government) in a law library when they arrive in Congress to make or amend these laws.

But it is more likely that the people attracted to politics decide to go to law school, fully aware of the tradition of lawyers in American politics. Moreover, political officeholding, at the state and local level as well as in the national government, can help a struggling lawyer’s private practice through free public advertising and opportunities to make contacts with potential clients. Finally, there are many special opportunities for lawyers to acquire public office in “lawyers only” posts in federal, state, and local government as

judges and prosecuting attorneys. The lawyer-politician is not usually a top professional lawyer. (We will examine the “superlawyers”—the nation’s legal elite—in Chapter 6). Instead, the typical lawyer-politician uses his or her law career as a means of support—one that is compatible with political office seeking and officeholding.

A significant number of top politicians have inherited great wealth. The Roosevelts, Rockefellers, Kennedys, Bushes, and others have used their wealth and family connections to support their political careers. However, it is important to note that *a majority of the nation’s top politicians have climbed the ladder from relative obscurity to political success*. Many have acquired some wealth in the process, but most political leaders started their climb from very middle-class circumstances. Thus, as in the corporate world, we find more “climbers” than “inheritors” at the top in the world of politics.

BILL CLINTON: THE POLITICAL CLIMBER

Born Billy Blythe in rural Hope, Arkansas, three months after his father’s death in an automobile accident, Bill Clinton learned that persistence and tenacity were the keys to success and acclaim. His strength was always his ability to mold himself into what others expected him to be.

Young Bill held so many class offices in high school that the principal told him he wasn’t allowed to take on any more. He assumed his stepfather’s name at age fifteen, even though he would later talk about the older man’s alcoholism and abuse. He won first place in the state band’s saxophone section, but his sights were set on politics, not music. As a delegate to Boys’ Nation, he won a handshake from President John F. Kennedy in 1963. He chose to study international relations at private, prestigious Georgetown University in Washington. No sooner had Clinton arrived at the capital, he called on his state’s U.S. senator, William J. Fulbright, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, presenting his job recommendations from hometown politicians. Fulbright took the young college student under his wing as a legislative aide. Clinton soon began reflecting his new mentor’s opposition to the Vietnam War.

Fulbright himself had been a Rhodes scholar at Oxford, and when Clinton graduated with his international affairs degree from Georgetown, Fulbright recommended Clinton for the same honor. At Oxford Clinton never finished a degree, but he cultivated friendships that would later enhance his public career. In London he helped organize anti-Vietnam War demonstrations, even while he worried that his antiwar activities might someday come back to haunt his political ambitions. When he received a draft notice, he promptly enrolled in the ROTC program at the University of Arkansas, making himself temporarily ineligible for the draft. Later, draft calls were cut back as President Richard Nixon de-escalated the war and a lottery system was

instituted. Clinton drew a high number making him unlikely to be drafted. Soon after, he wrote to the ROTC withdrawing his name, “Thank you for saving me from the draft. . . .,” acknowledging that his real plans were to go to Yale Law School, which he entered in 1970. He met his future wife, Hillary Rodham, a classmate at Yale Law School, daughter of a wealthy Chicago family, and a graduate of Wellesley.

Upon graduation from Yale Law School, Clinton turned down offers to return to Washington as a congressional staff aide. He was anxious to launch his own political career, and he knew that the road to elective office ran through his home state. Within a year he was running for a seat in Congress. Trying to capitalize on the Watergate scandal, he challenged a veteran Republican congressman. With long 60s-style hair, a Yale and Oxford background, and liberal friends coming from Washington to help in the campaign, including Hillary Rodham, he could have lost by a wide margin in conservative Arkansas. But instead, he came within a few votes of defeating a strong incumbent, in part as a result of the Watergate scandal that swept many Democrats into Congress in 1974, and in part a result of his own tireless campaigning.

Clinton’s strong showing in the congressional race won him political recognition statewide. When the state’s elected attorney general decided to run for Congress in 1976, Clinton mounted a successful campaign to replace him. In 1978, when Governor David Pryor left office to run for the U.S. Senate, Clinton jumped into the open gubernatorial contest. His relatively easy victory (he won 60 percent of the vote in a five-man Democratic primary, and 63 percent of the vote in the general election) made him the nation’s youngest governor at age thirty-two. Viewing himself as a vanguard of a new generation, he set about pushing a broad program of liberal reform for Arkansas, increasing taxes and expenditures. But as a Yale-educated Rhodes scholar, he created an image of an arrogant, isolated, crusading, liberal politician, out of touch with his more conservative Arkansas constituency. Clinton was defeated in his 1980 reelection bid by a conservative Republican banker.

Clinton’s defeat “forever influenced the way he approached government and politics.”² He proceeded to remold himself into a political moderate, calling for “workfare” to replace welfare, supporting the death penalty, and working to create a favorable business climate in Arkansas. He cut his hair and his wife began using her married name, so as not to offend social conservatives. He told his state’s voters that he had been humbled by his earlier loss and he promised “to listen to the people.” He was elected governor once again in 1982, winning 42 percent of the vote in a five-man Democratic primary and 54 percent against the Republican governor in the general election. He would go on to win two more two-year terms by more substantial margins.

By most accounts, Bill Clinton became a successful governor. He focused his energies on two areas—economic development and education. He raised

² *New York Times*, July 16, 1992, p. A14.

taxes for education and forced both students and teachers to take competency tests. He declared himself an environmentalist but granted concessions to his state's giant chicken industry in the interest of the economy. His many compromises and accommodations led to his "slick Willie" label by the *Arkansas Democrat Gazette*.

Michael Dukakis's disastrous defeat in 1988 reinforced Bill Clinton's view that only a moderate Democrat could succeed in winning the presidency. Just as he had shaped his image to better fit his Arkansas constituents, he molded his national image as a "new" Democrat—concerned with economic growth, favoring workfare over welfare, tough on crime, and willing to stand up to traditional core Democratic interest groups—labor unions, minorities, and government employees. He served for a while as chairman of the centrist Democratic Leadership Conference (DLC), denounced by Jesse Jackson as "Democrat for the Leisure Class." He used the DLC as a platform to promote a winning Democratic presidential profile—a moderate, pro-business, pro-investment Democrat capable of winning back the support of the white middle class. He espoused "neo-liberal" ideas about government's role in promoting and "investing" in American industry, and he began winning constituents among Wall Street and business interests. He perfected his down-home "aw shucks" Elvis-style mannerisms. He sought to control his motor-mouth delivery of programmatic facts and figures. (In his long-winded 1988 Democratic convention speech, he had drawn cheers with the words "In conclusion.") He honed his skills as an organizer and fund-raiser. He promised everything to everybody: "We can be pro-growth and pro-environment, we can be pro-business and pro-labor, we can make government work again by making it more aggressive and leaner and more effective at the same time, and we can be pro-family and pro-choice."³

Success in politics is often a product of good fortune. Few would have predicted in 1991 that George Bush's all-time high presidential popularity after the Gulf War would plummet with the onset of an economic recession. Indeed, the real heavyweights in the Democratic party—Mario Cuomo, Bill Bradley, Richard Gephardt, Lloyd Bentsen, Jesse Jackson—all decided early not to try to challenge the popular incumbent President. But Bill Clinton had little to lose; in fact, a good run at the presidency in 1992 might gain him national prominence and a real chance to capture the office in 1996. Yet as the recession lengthened into 1992 and Bush's popularity drastically declined, Clinton's teenage dreams of becoming President took on real meaning.

Early in the Democratic primaries, Bill Clinton almost lost the prize he had sought for a lifetime when Genifer Flowers held a nationally televised press conference to expose a long-term affair with the governor. Rumors of marital infidelity had shadowed Clinton for many years. The same problem had driven Gary Hart out of the presidential race in 1988. But a tenacious Bill

³ *Time*, November 2, 1992, p. 33.

Clinton decided to confront the “bimbo” issue head-on early in the campaign. So when Don Hewitt, liberal producer of *60 Minutes*, offered Clinton a Sunday night prime-time interview just after the Superbowl, the candidate accepted. With Hillary at his side, Clinton told a huge nationwide audience that his marriage had survived shaky moments but it was rock solid now.

The Democratic convention was a celebration of Clinton’s good fortune. When the temperamental Ross Perot unexpectedly withdrew from the race, millions of his disillusioned supporters were set adrift at precisely the moment that Clinton was broadcasting his message of change to national audiences. Perot’s moderate, middle-class, independent supporters flocked to Clinton’s banner. They had lost confidence in Bush’s handling of the economy and were prepared to overlook Clinton’s character flaws. The choice of Al Gore as running mate, a man of presidential stature in his own right, seemed to demonstrate Clinton’s good judgment and self-confidence. It also balanced the ticket with a Vietnam War veteran and committed family man. By the end of the Democratic convention, Clinton had soared to a twenty-point lead in the polls.

The voter’s anxieties about the economy determined the election outcome. While Clinton emerged only five percentage points ahead of Bush in the popular vote, the nation’s desire for change was clearly evident in the combined votes for Clinton and Perot. Fully 62 percent of the voters chose to vote against their incumbent President. Clinton prevailed because he skillfully presented himself to the voters as an agent of change.

Clinton stumbled badly early in his first term. His first major battle—to retain homosexuals in the military—proved a disaster. Military chiefs, including the popular General Colin Powell, resisted, and Clinton was forced to retreat. He succeeded in getting the Democratic-controlled Congress to pass a large tax increase, raising the top marginal income tax rate from 31 to 39.6 percent. But in his second year, a massive national health-care program developed under Hillary’s direction failed, and Clinton’s approval ratings sagged. The sweeping Republican congressional victory in 1994 appeared to foreshadow a one-term presidency for Clinton. But characteristically he mounted another political “comeback.” He vetoed several Republican balanced-budget plans, and when the government temporarily “shut down,” Clinton shifted the blame to the Republican Congress. He cast himself as a defender of “Medicare, Medicaid, education, and the environment” against the mean-spirited Republican Speaker Newt Gingrich. Clinton’s approval ratings began a long rise.

Clinton had relatively little difficulty in defeating the old Republican standard-bearer, Bob Dole, to win a second term in 1996. The economy was in a strong recovery, and voters showed little interest in the aging Dole’s promises of tax reductions. Clinton again campaigned as a centrist. He modestly observed in his election-night victory speech: “Tonight we proclaim that the vital American center is alive and well.” But even if he had sought to return to

a liberal agenda, it is not likely that a Republican Congress would have allowed him to get very far. Critics of President Clinton describe his second term as “risk adverse,” adrift, and even aimless. Yet the nation’s booming economy in the 1990s kept Clinton’s approval ratings high. It also provided a solution to what had been the nation’s most vexing problem: continuing deficit spending. Robust economic growth increased federal tax revenues enough to produce a balanced federal budget, a goal that had eluded presidents and congresses for over a quarter-century.

Bill Clinton is the second president in the nation’s history (following Andrew Johnson in 1867) to be impeached by the U.S. House of Representatives. (President Richard Nixon resigned just prior to an impeachment vote in 1974.) The 1998 House impeachment vote split along partisan lines (228 to 106, with all but five Republicans voting “yes” and all but five Democrats voting “no.”) It followed a report to the House by Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr that recommended impeachment for perjury, obstruction of justice, witness tampering, and “abuse of power.”

The Starr Report describes in graphic and lurid detail Clinton’s sexual relationship with young White House intern Monica Lewinsky. It cites as impeachable offenses Clinton’s lying about their relationship to his staff, friends, and the nation; his misleading testimony in a sworn statement in the earlier Paula Jones case; his conversations with close friend Vernon Jordan about finding Lewinsky a job; his attempts to impede Starr’s investigation; and his evasive testimony before Starr’s grand jury:

QUESTION: “I have a question regarding your definition [of sexual relations] then. And my question is, is oral sex performed on you within that definition . . . ?”

ANSWER: “As I understood it, it was not, no.”

QUESTION: “Well, the grand jury would like to know, Mr. President, why it is you think that oral sex performed on you does not fall within the definition of sexual relations?”

ANSWER: “Because that is—if the deponent is the person who has oral sex performed on him, then the contact is with—not with anything on that list, but with the lips of another person.”⁴

The American people apparently did not believe that Clinton’s misconduct should result in his impeachment and removal from office:

QUESTION: Do you approve or disapprove of the House decision to vote in favor of impeaching Clinton and sending the case to the Senate for trial?
Yes—35% No—63%⁵

⁴ Congressional *Quarterly Weekly Report*, Sept. 26, 1998, pp. 2607–2613.

⁵ Gallup poll reported in *USA Today*, December 21, 1998.

On the contrary, Clinton's approval rating rose to an all-time high (68 percent) during the impeachment proceedings. The Senate "trial" on February 12, 1999, also divided along party lines. But removing Clinton from office failed to win even a majority of Senate votes, far less than the required two-thirds. All 45 Democrats were joined by 5 Republicans to create a 50–50 tie vote that left Clinton tarnished but still in office.

Clinton himself seems aware that he will never be ranked among the great presidents. "Greatness," he believes, is as much a product of the times as the man. Clinton faced no really great national or international challenges during his presidency; an opposition-controlled Congress limited his policy options; and good economic times dampened the public's enthusiasm for new government programs.⁶

It is not clear whether his policy centrism was pragmatic and skillful, or unprincipled and opportunistic. Perhaps he deserves praise for fiscal responsibility—initially raising taxes, presiding over economic growth with low inflation, and eventually presenting balanced federal budgets to the nation. On the other hand, perhaps his personal conduct contributed to the nation's cultural amorality—its willingness to overlook character defects in its leadership as long as the good times roll on.

THE BUSH FAMILY DYNASTY

The Bushes are inheritors in politics. President George W. Bush's grandfather, U.S. Senator Prescott Bush, was the managing partner in the once great Wall Street investment firm of Brown Brothers, Harriman & Co., as well as chairman of the board of Yale Corporation, which governs Yale University, and Republican U.S. senator from Connecticut from 1962 to 1972. George Herbert Walker Bush was born in 1924 and spent his boyhood in upper-class Greenwich, Connecticut. He attended the Greenwich Country Day School before entering Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts, where he was captain of the soccer team and president of his senior class.

"Poppy"

At age seventeen, in the dark days of World War II, George Bush set aside his admission to Yale in order to join the Navy. His worried father asked President Roosevelt to ignore the age requirements and allow George to be commissioned as an ensign. As the youngest pilot in the U.S. Navy, Bush was assigned to the light aircraft carrier U.S.S. *San Jacinto* in 1943. He flew fifty-eight combat missions. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and three Air

⁶ See Bert A. Rockman, "Cutting with the Grain: Is There a Clinton Leadership Legacy?" in Colin Campbell and Bert A. Rockman, eds., *The Clinton Legacy* (New York: Chatham House, 2000), p. 288.

Medals for action in the Pacific. His torpedo bomber was shot down, his two crewmen were killed, and he was rescued at sea by a submarine. He returned home on leave to marry Barbara Pierce, daughter of the publisher of *Redbook* and *McCall's* magazines.

George Bush entered Yale in September of 1945. He captained the baseball team and graduated in three years, Phi Beta Kappa in economics. His father wanted him to join his investment banking firm in New York, but at twenty-five George wanted to strike out on his own. "On his own" turned out to be a job as vice-president of Dresser Industries, a Texas oil-drilling equipment firm of which his father was a director. George Bush quickly became very successful in the Texas oil business. He formed several oil companies with financing from his uncle, Herbert Walker: Bush-Overby, Zapata Petroleum, and Zapata Offshore Oil. He served as a director of the First International Bank of Houston and London as well as of Eli Lilly, Texas Gulf, and Purolator. By the early 1960s Bush was a multimillionaire Texas oilman still in his thirties. Having conquered the world of business, he turned to politics.

Bush did not have the same easy success in politics that he enjoyed in business. In 1964 he plunged into a campaign to unseat Ralph Yarborough, U.S. senator from Texas and ally of President Lyndon Johnson. Bush fell victim to the Johnson landslide in that year but captured a larger share of the vote than any previous Republican candidate in Texas. In 1966, Bush returned to the political fray to win election to Congress from a wealthy suburban Houston district. After serving two terms in the House, he set out again in 1970 to defeat Ralph Yarborough and win a Senate seat. But Yarborough was upset in the Democratic primary by another wealthy oilman, conservative Democrat Lloyd Bentsen. The Bush-Bentsen race was hard fought and expensive for both sides; Bush was edged out in a very close election.

President Richard Nixon named George Bush to the post of United Nations ambassador in 1970, where he served for two years. Following Nixon's reelection, the President named Bush as chairman of the Republican National Committee, a job which became very difficult as the Watergate scandal mushroomed. But most of the Watergate evils occurred under the Committee to Reelect the President (CREEP—an organization which was separate from the Republican National Committee), and George Bush was successful in keeping the regular Republican organization free of scandal and his own name untarnished. A grateful President Gerald Ford asked Bush to pick his own post in the new administration, and Bush chose the newly created ambassadorship to the People's Republic of China. In 1975 President Ford asked him to return from China to head the Central Intelligence Agency.

George Bush inherited the support of the Eastern Establishment wing of the Republican party. These internationalist Wall Street Republicans had formed the foundation of Eisenhower's administration and had been led for many years thereafter by Nelson Rockefeller. Following Gerald Ford's defeat at the hands of Jimmy Carter, Bush began his own bid for the presidency. He

hoped to combine his Eastern Establishment support with his Texas oil friends, thus bringing together the new wealth of the Sunbelt and the old wealth of the East. He recruited his friend, Houston attorney James A. Baker, Ford's campaign manager, as his own and conducted a vigorous nationwide campaign. But Ronald Reagan had spent years building his political base among the southern and western Sunbelt Republicans. Following a New Hampshire debate in which Bush looked stiff and inflexible and Reagan relaxed and amiable, Bush narrowly lost the 1980 New Hampshire presidential primary. Although Bush went on to win primaries in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania, he was "stunned" again by Reagan's victory in Bush's home state of Texas. Despite his many years in Texas, George Bush was unable to escape his Eastern preppy background to win the hearts of Texans. At the Republican National Convention, Ronald Reagan turned to George Bush as his vice-presidential running mate to balance the Reagan ticket with his foreign policy experience and appeal to Republican moderates.

George Bush was a supremely loyal Vice-President. He steadfastly refused to differ with his President—even when he was being skewered by the media for the Iranian arms-for-hostages dealings. Indeed, George Bush was portrayed as a terminal second banana with no principles or passions of his own, forever to be overshadowed by Ronald Reagan. *Newsweek* magazine even devoted its cover to branding Bush as a "wimp."⁷

But George Bush's loyalty to his President paid off handsomely. Ronald Reagan recovered his popularity in his final year. Eight years of peace and prosperity were rewarded at the polls. Bush was perceived as the legitimate heir to the Reagan legacy, both in the primary elections where he swept away his Republican challengers, and in the general election where Michael Dukakis failed to convince Americans that their well-being was a temporary illusion.

George Bush's presidential performance was schizophrenic—strength, perseverance, and victory in foreign and military affairs, and weakness, vacillation, and defeat on domestic matters. He became President at a turning point in world history—the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, the end of the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact anti-Western military alliance, and the disintegration of the Soviet Union itself. He was given the opportunity to declare Western victory in the decades-long Cold War and to lay the foundation for a "new world order" in which the United States occupied the predominant global position. His finest hour was his resolute performance in the Persian Gulf. He assembled a worldwide political coalition, including the Soviet Union, China, and Western and Arab nations, against Saddam Hussein's invasion and occupation of Kuwait. He wisely left the strategic planning and implementation of military operations to a highly capable team—Defense Secretary Richard Cheney, Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Colin Powell, and

⁷ *Newsweek*, October 19, 1987.

field commander General Norman Schwarzkopf. He avoided the mistakes of Vietnam—gradual escalation of force, prolonged operations, accumulating casualties, muddled negotiations, moratoriums of bombings, political interference in military operations. He sought a rapid, decisive military victory with the use of overwhelming force. He resisted efforts to stall the attack or engage in endless negotiations or allow intermediaries to compromise the outcome. He sought to limit casualties among Americans and coalition forces and perhaps ended the war too soon. But his overall performance as Commander-in-Chief earned him the highest public approval rating ever attained by an American President.

By contrast, in the domestic policy arena, George Bush was a failure. He lacked his predecessor Ronald Reagan's ideological commitments. He was never able to use his Gulf War popularity to seize the initiative in domestic affairs. He offered few domestic policy ideas to Congress. On key issues he collapsed in the face of congressional pressure. He campaigned on as firm a promise as any candidate could make on taxes: "Read my lips! No new taxes!" Yet in his second year in office he agreed to support an increase in income-tax rates. He took a strong rhetorical stand against "quotas" in civil rights legislation, yet later signed a bill almost identical to an earlier one he had vetoed. And when recession struck the nation's economy, he responded with too little too late, leaving the impression that he was "out of touch" with the concerns of the American people.

Bush's public approval ratings plummeted throughout the spring of 1992. Although the economy began a slow recovery, the media focused on the nation's economic ills. Ross Perot detached millions of middle-class voters from Bush by turning the spotlight on the government's huge deficits. Democrat Bill Clinton dodged attacks on his own character and captured the image of change. Bush's reelection campaign was in shambles; James Baker left his post as secretary of state to try to rescue his old friend. But Bush turned in a lackluster performance in the first two presidential debates, and a final mini-surge in his campaign fell short. The nation clearly wanted change as 62 percent of the voters chose either Clinton or Perot over Bush. The voters did not so much express confidence in Clinton as dissatisfaction with Bush and his neglect of their domestic discontents.

"Dubya"

George W. followed in his father's footsteps to Yale University, but he was not the scholar-athlete that his father had been. Rather, he was a friendly, likable, heavy drinking president of his fraternity. Upon graduation in 1968, he joined the Texas Air National Guard, completed flight school, but never faced combat in Vietnam. He earned an MBA degree from the Harvard Business School and returned to Texas to enter the oil business himself. Later in his career he

would acknowledge his “youthful indiscretions,” including a drunk driving arrest in 1976.

Although his famous name attracted investors in a series of oil companies he managed, virtually all of them lost money (including the Harvard Management Company that invests that university’s endowment funds). Even a deal with the government of oil-rich Bahrain, negotiated while his father was president, failed to bail out Bush’s Harken Energy Company. But Bush was able to sell off his oil interests and reinvest the money in the Texas Rangers baseball team; he eventually sold his interest in the Rangers in a deal that netted him over \$15 million.

George W. Bush had never held public office before running for governor of Texas in 1994. But he had gained valuable political experience serving as an unofficial adviser to his father during his presidential campaigns. He went up against the sharp-tongued incumbent Democratic Governor Ann Richards, who ridiculed him as the “shrub” (little Bush). Bush heavily outspent Richards and won 54 percent of the vote, to become Texas’s second Republican governor in modern times.

George W.’s political style fitted comfortably with the Texas “good old boys” in both parties. Although the Texas legislature was controlled by Democrats, Bush won most of his early legislative battles. He supported legislation that gave law-abiding adult Texans the right to carry concealed handguns. A strong economy allowed him to improve public services yet keep Texas among the few states without an income tax. He supported educational reform by opposing the practice of “social promotion” and requiring third-, fifth-, and eighth-grade pupils to pass statewide tests before advancing to the next grade.

Bush’s style was to meet frequently and privately with his Democratic opponents and to remain on friendly personal terms with them. He was willing to accept legislative compromises and tried to avoid controversies wherever possible. He helped to lead the gradual realignment of Texas away from its traditional Democratic roots and toward its current Republican coloration.

Bush versus Gore

George W. Bush and Al Gore were both born into family traditions of wealth, privilege, and public service. Both attended prestigious private prep schools—Bush, Andover; Gore, St. Albans. Both attended Ivy League universities—Bush, Yale; Gore, Harvard.

By traditional expectations, Democratic Vice-President Al Gore’s election should have been a “slam dunk.” The nation was enjoying economic prosperity, low unemployment, low inflation, budget surpluses, and relative peace. Traditionally, under such conditions, Americans have kept the incumbent party in the White House.

But the campaign started off very badly for Al Gore. The Veep was perceived as a stiff, wooden prop for his boss, the flawed yet charismatic Bill Clinton. Gore trailed George W. Bush badly in opinion polls for the first eight months of the election year. He tried to “reinvent” himself several times—self-consciously projecting different images of himself at different times. His “image adviser” recommended that he give up formal suits and ties for more relaxed sweaters and open-collar shirts and that he become an “Alpha male”—spirited and aggressive rather than subdued and wonkish. Yet throughout the Spring he seemed unable to shed the image of a loyal, decent, yet colorless backup to the more magnetic Clinton.

George W. Bush’s campaign rested largely on his personal appeal to voters—his warmth, good humor, and general likability. Early on, he settled on the theme of “*compassionate conservatism*,” trying to appeal to independents, minorities, and especially women. Bush partially dispelled the notion that he lacked sufficient “gravitas” (wisdom and experience) in the televised presidential debates. Although out-pointed by Gore, he succeeded in convincing most viewers that he had a good grasp of the issues. Gore appeared overly aggressive, perhaps even rude, especially in the first debate. Bush retook the lead in the polls following the debates. But each day there seemed to be large gyrations in the polling figures.

As the campaign progressed, Gore distanced himself from Clinton, apparently in an effort to direct the campaign away from his former boss’s scandals. But in doing so, he failed to take full credit for the nation’s years of prosperity under Clinton. Overall, Gore won on the issues—the economy, education, Social Security, health care, and so forth. But Bush was judged by the voters to be more “likable.”⁸

Americans were given a dramatic reminder in 2000 that the president of the United States is *not* elected by nationwide popular vote but rather by a majority of the electoral votes of the states. Democrat Al Gore won 500,000 more popular votes nationwide than Republican George W. Bush, out of more than one hundred million votes cast. But Bush won the majority of the states’ electoral votes—271 to 267—the narrowest margin in American history.

Early on election night the television networks “called” the key battleground states for Gore, in effect declaring him the winner. But by 9 P.M. Florida was yanked back into the undecided column; the electoral college vote looked like it was splitting down the middle. Around 1 A.M., Florida was “called” for Bush, and the networks pronounced him the next president of the United States. Gore telephoned Bush to concede, but shortly thereafter, upon hearing that the gap in Florida was closing fast, Gore withdrew his concession. For the second time, the television networks put Florida back into the “too close to call” column.

Teams of lawyers descended on Florida for the first post-election presi-

⁸ CNN/USA Today Poll, October 17, 2000.

dential contest in over a century. Each side called on their legal and political heavyweights. The Bush campaign sent a team of attorneys headed by former Secretary of State James Baker, and the Gore campaign sent an eighteen-person team headed by former Secretary of State Warren Christopher. The battle of the ballots would consume over a month.

In the end it was the most elitist branch of the U.S. government, the Supreme Court, that actually chose the president. Only the High Court seemed to possess sufficient legitimacy to resolve the first contested presidential election in over a century. The Supreme Court's decision on December 12 in *Bush vs. Gore* rested on constitutional issues, but the 5–4 division of the Court raised the question of the Court's political impartiality. The Supreme Court's majority held that "the use of standardless manual recounts violates the Equal Protection and Due Process Clauses" of the Constitution. And three justices in the majority held that the Florida Supreme Court "plainly departed from the legislative scheme" previously enacted by the Florida Legislature and therefore violated Article II of the Constitution. The Court divided along ideological lines. The five justices in the majority included acknowledged conservatives Renquist, Scalia, and Thomas, together with moderates O'Connor and Kennedy. The minority included the acknowledged liberals, Stevens, Breyer, and Ginsburg, together with Souter. Yet despite the prolonged contest, the bitter feelings of many of the participants, and the apparently ideological split, George W. Bush was recognized as the legitimate president of the United States immediately after the Supreme Court's historic decision.

EXECUTIVE DECISION-MAKERS: THE SERIOUS PEOPLE

The politician is a professional office-seeker. The politician knows how to run for office—but not necessarily how to run the government. After victory at the polls, the prudent politician turns to "serious" people to run the government.⁹ The corporate and governmental experience and educational credentials of

⁹ Pulitzer Prize-winning writer David Halberstam reports a revealing conversation between newly elected President John F. Kennedy and Robert A. Lovett in December 1960, a month before Kennedy was to take office: "On the threshold of great power and great office, the young man seemed to have everything. He was handsome, rich, charming, candid . . . [But] he had spent the last five years, he said ruefully, running for office, and he did not know any real public officials, people to run a government, *serious men*. The only ones he knew, he admitted, were politicians. . . . Politicians *did* need men to serve, to run the government." Robert Lovett was "the very embodiment of the Establishment." His father had been chairman of the board of Union Pacific Railroad and a partner of the great railroad tycoon, E. H. Harriman. Lovett urged Kennedy to listen to the advice of Lovett's partner and former governor of New York and ambassador to the Soviet Union, Averell Harriman; to see "Jack McCloy at Chase" (then chairman of the board of Chase Manhattan), and "Doug Dillon too" (to become Kennedy's secretary of the treasury); to look up a "young fellow over at Rockefeller, Dean Rusk" (to become Kennedy's secretary of state); and to get "this young man at Ford, Robert McNamara" (to become Kennedy's secretary of defense). Kennedy gratefully accepted the advice: he turned to these "serious men" to run the government. David Halberstam, *The Best and Brightest* (New York: Random House, 1969), pp. 3–4.

these “serious” decision-makers greatly exceed those of most members of Congress or other elected officials. When presidents turn from the task of *running for office* to the task of *running a government*, they are obliged to recruit higher quality leadership than is typically found among political officeholders.

The responsibility for the initiation of national programs and policies falls primarily upon the top White House staff and the heads of executive departments. Generally, Congress merely responds to policy proposals initiated by the executive branch. The President and his key advisers and administrators have a strong incentive to fulfill their responsibility for decision-making. In the eyes of the American public, they are responsible for everything that happens in the nation, regardless of whether they have the authority or capacity to do anything about it. There is a general expectation that every administration, even one committed to a “caretaker” role, will put forth some sort of policy program.

The President and Vice-President, White House presidential advisers and ambassadors-at-large, Cabinet secretaries, undersecretaries, and assistant secretaries constitute our executive elite. Let us take a brief look at the careers of some of the people who have served in key Cabinet positions in recent presidential administrations.

SECRETARIES OF STATE

John Foster Dulles. (1953–60). Senior partner of Sullivan & Cromwell, and member of the board of directors of the Bank of New York, Fifth Avenue Bank, American Bank Note Co., International Nickel Co. of Canada, Babcock and Wilson Corp., Shenandoah Corp., United Cigar Stores, American Cotton Oil Co., United Railroad of St. Louis, and European Textile Corp. He was a trustee of the New York Public Library, Union Theological Seminary, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; also a delegate to the World Council of Churches.

Dean Rusk. (1961–68). President of the Rockefeller Foundation.

William P. Rogers. (1969–73). U.S. attorney general during Eisenhower administration; senior partner in Royall, Koegal, Rogers and Wells (one of the twenty largest Wall Street law firms).

Henry Kissinger. (1973–77). Special assistant to the president for national security affairs; former Harvard professor of international affairs, and project director for Rockefeller Brothers Fund and for the Council on Foreign Relations.

Cyrus Vance. (1977–80). Senior partner in the New York law firm of Simpson, Thacher & Bartlett. A member of the board of directors of IBM and Pan American World Airways; a trustee of Yale University, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the Council on Foreign Relations; former secretary of the army under President Lyndon Johnson.

Alexander M. Haig, Jr. (1981–82). President of United Technologies Corporation, and former four-star general, U.S. Army. He was former Supreme Allied Commander, NATO forces in Europe; former assistant to the President under Richard

Nixon; former deputy assistant to the President for national security under Henry Kissinger; former deputy commandant, U.S. Military Academy at West Point; former deputy secretary of defense.

George P. Shultz. (1982–89). President of the Bechtel Corporation. Former secretary of the treasury, former secretary of labor, and former director of Office of Management and Budget under President Richard Nixon. Earned Ph.D. in economics from M.I.T. Former dean of the school of business, University of Chicago. Former director of General Motors, Borg-Warner, and Dillon, Read & Co.

James A. Baker III. (1989–92). Houston attorney and oil man who previously served as secretary of the treasury and White House chief of staff in the Reagan administration.

Warren Christopher. (1993–1997). California attorney (former law clerk for U.S. Supreme Court Justice William Douglas); partner, O'Melvany & Meyers; Deputy Secretary of State under President Carter; a director of California Edison, First Interstate Bancorp, Lockheed, and chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Carnegie Corp.

Madeleine Albright. (1997–2001). Georgetown University professor; U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations; member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

SECRETARIES OF TREASURY

George M. Humphrey. (1953–57). Former chairman of the board of directors of the M.A. Hanna Co.; member of board of directors of National Steel Corp., Consolidated Coal Co. of Canada, and Dominion Sugar Co.; trustee of M.I.T.

Robert B. Anderson. (1957–61). Secretary of the navy, 1953–54; deputy secretary of defense, 1945–55; member of board of directors of Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co. and Pan American World Airways; member of the executive board of the Boy Scouts of America.

Douglas Dillon. (1961–63). Chairman of the board of Dillon, Read & Co. (one of Wall Street's largest investment firms); member of New York Stock Exchange; director of U.S. and Foreign Securities Corp. and U.S. International Securities Corp.; member of board of governors of New York Hospital and the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

David Kennedy. (1969–71). President and chairman of the board of Continental Illinois Bank and Trust Co.; director of International Harvester Co., Commonwealth Edison, Pullman Co., Abbott Laboratories, Swift and Co., U.S. Gypsum, and Communications Satellite Corp.; trustee of the University of Chicago, the Brookings Institution, the Committee for Economic Development, and George Washington University.

John B. Connally. (1971–72). Secretary of the navy, governor of Texas, administrative assistant to Lyndon B. Johnson; attorney for Murcheson Brothers Investment (Dallas); former director of New York Central Railroad.

George P. Shultz. (1972–74). Secretary of labor and director of the Office of Management and Budget; former dean of the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business; former director of Borg-Warner Corp., General American Transportation Co., and Stein, Roe & Farnham (investments).

William E. Simon. (1974–77). Director of Federal Energy Office, and former deputy secretary of the treasury; formerly a senior partner of Salomon Brothers (one of Wall Street's largest investment firms specializing in municipal bond trading).

Warner Michael Blumenthal. (1977–79). President of the Bendix Corporation; former vice-president of Crown Cork Co.; trustee of Princeton University and the Council on Foreign Relations.

G. William Miller. (1979–81). Chairman and chief executive officer of Textron Corporation. Former partner in Cravath, Swaine & Moore (one of the nation's twenty-five largest and most prestigious law firms); a former director of Allied Chemical and Federated Department Stores; former chairman of the Federal Reserve Board.

Donald T. Regan. (1981–85). Chairman of the board and chief executive officer of Merrill Lynch & Co. Inc. (the nation's largest investment firm); former vice-chairman of the New York Stock Exchange; trustee of the University of Pennsylvania and the Committee for Economic Development; member of the policy committee of the Business Roundtable.

James A. Baker III. (1985–89). Wealthy Houston attorney whose father owned Texas Commerce Bank. Former undersecretary of commerce in the Ford administration and campaign chairman for George Bush's unsuccessful presidential race in 1980. President Reagan's White House chief of staff in his first term.

Nicholas Brady. (1989–93). Former chairman of Dillon, Read & Co.; a director of Purolator, NCR, Georgia International, ASA, and Media General.

Robert E. Rubin. (1995–2001). Chairman of the Wall Street investment firm Goldman Sachs. Trustee, Carnegie Corp.

SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE

Charles E. Wilson. (1953–57). President and chairman of the board of directors of General Motors.

Neil H. McElroy. (1957–59). President and chairman of the board of directors of Procter & Gamble; member of the board of directors of General Electric, Chrysler Corp., and Equitable Life Assurance Co.; member of the board of trustees of Harvard University, the National Safety Council, and the National Industrial Conference.

Thomas S. Gates. (1959–60). Secretary of the navy, 1957–59; chairman of the board and chief executive officer, Morgan Guaranty Trust Co.; member of the board of directors of General Electric, Bethlehem Steel, Scott Paper Co., Campbell Soup Co., Insurance Co. of North America, Cities Service, SmithKline and French (pharmaceuticals), and the University of Pennsylvania.

Robert S. McNamara. (1961–67). President and chairman of the board of directors of the Ford Motor Co.; member of the board of directors of Scott Paper Co.; president of the World Bank, 1967–81.

Clark Clifford. (1967–69). Senior partner of Clifford & Miller (Washington law firm); member of board of directors of the National Bank of Washington and the

Sheridan Hotel Corp.; special counsel to the President, 1949–50; member of the board of trustees of Washington University in St. Louis.

Melvin Laird. (1969–73). Wisconsin Republican congressman, and former chairman of Republican conference in the House of Representatives.

James R. Schlesinger. (1973–77). Director, Central Intelligence Agency; former chairman of Atomic Energy Commission; formerly assistant director of the Office of Management and Budget; economics professor; and research associate of the RAND Corp.

Harold Brown. (1977–81). President of the California Institute of Technology. A member of the board of directors of International Business Machines (IBM) and the Times-Mirror Corp. Former secretary of the air force under President Lyndon Johnson, and U.S. representative to the SALT I talks under President Richard Nixon.

Caspar W. Weinberger. (1981–89). Vice-president and director of the Bechtel Corporation, the world's largest privately owned corporation. A member of the board of directors of Pepsico and Quaker Oats Co. Former secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare under President Richard Nixon; former director of the Office of Management and Budget; former chairman of the Federal Trade Commission. A former San Francisco attorney and California state legislator.

Richard B. Cheney. (1989–93). Congressman and chairman of the House Republican Conference; assistant to the President, Gerald Ford; chairman of the Cost of Living Council; director of Office of Economic Opportunity under President Richard Nixon. Attorney.

Les Aspin. (1993–94). Ph.D. Economics. U.S. Army 1966–68; House of Representatives, 1970–92; chairman of the House Armed Forces Committee, 1985–92.

William J. Perry. (1994–1997). Ph.D. Mathematics. Former director of Electronic Defense Laboratories of GTE; former director of Stanford University Center for International Security; former Deputy Secretary of Defense.

William S. Cohen. (1997–2001). Attorney. U.S. Senator from Maine.

THE BUSH RESTORATION

The Bush Cabinet brings familiar faces back to Washington. Indeed, insiders in the Ford, Reagan, and especially Bush (the elder) administrations must feel very comfortable with the return of so many of their friends. Among eighteen Cabinet-level officials (which include the Vice-President, fourteen department heads, plus the National Security Adviser, White House Chief of Staff, and Director of the Office of Management and Budget), eleven have served in high places in previous Republican administrations (see Table 4–2). Perhaps stocking the cabinet with old Washington hands is designed to compensate for Bush's own perceived lack of experience and preference for delegating decisions.

TABLE 4-2 The Bush Restoration

<i>Position</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Career Highlights</i>	<i>Corporate Connections¹</i>
President George W. Bush	B.A., Yale; M.B.A., Harvard	Oil co exec.; Mgr./Dir. Texas Rangers	Gov. Texas, 1994–2000	Harkin Energy,* Texas Rangers,* Enron, Philip Morris, AT&T, Microsoft
Vice-President Richard Cheney	B.A., M.A., U. of Wyoming	Oil co exec.	White House staff, 75–77; U.S. Rep. WY, 79–89; Sec't Defense, 89–93	Halliburton Oil,* Enron, Philip Morris, AT&T, Microsoft
Secretary of State Colin Powell	B.S., CUNY; M.B.A., George Washington U.	Army officer	Nat'l. Sec. Adv., 87–89; Chrm JCS, 89–94; founder, America's Promise, 95–00	AOL Time Warner,* Gulfstream Aerospace,* General Dynamics*
Secretary of Treasury Paul H. O'Neill	B.A., Fresno State U.; M.P.A. U. of Indiana	Aluminum co. exec.	OMB staff, 67–77; vice- president International Paper, 77–87; Chairman & CEO, Alcoa, 87–00	Alcoa,* International Paper,* Lucent Technologies,* Eastman Kodak*
Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld	A.B., Princeton	Drug co. exec.	U.S. Rep. IL, 63–69; Assistant to President, 69–75; Secretary of Defense, 75–77; President, G.D. Searle, 77–85	G.D. Searle,* Tribune Co.,* Motorola,* Gulfstream Aerospace,* General Dynamics,* Sears Roebuck,* Allstate,* Kellogg*
Attorney General John Ashcroft	B.A., Yale; J.D., U. of Chicago	Attorney	Atty. Gen., MO, 76–85; Gov.r, MO, 85–93; U.S. Senator, MO, 94–00	AT&T, Microsoft, Monsanto, Enterprise Rent-A-Car
Secretary of Commerce Donald L. Evans	B.S., M.B.A., U. of Texas	Oil co. exec.	Chrm., Bush–Cheney 2000	Tom Brown Inc.,* Sharp Drilling*

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Secretary of HUD Mel Martinez	B.A., J.D., Florida State U.	Attorney	Chrm., Orange County FL Commission, 95-00	none
Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao	B.A., Mount Holyoke; M.B.A., Harvard	Banker; Pres. of Civic Org.	Director, Peace Corp., 91-92; President, United Way, 92-96	Northwest Airlines,* Clorox,* HCA,* Bank of America,* Dole Food*
Secretary of Transportation Norman Y. Mineta	B.S., U. of California	Aircraft co. exec.	Mayor, San Jose, CA, 71-74; U.S. Rep. CA, 75-95; V.P. Lockheed Martin, 95-00; Sect. of Commerce, 00	Lockheed Martin,* Northwest Airlines, United Airlines, Union Pacific, Boeing
Secretary of Interior Gale Norton	B.A., J.D., U. of Denver	Attorney	Staff, Dept. of Interior, 85-90; Attorney General, CO, 91-99	Delta Petroleum, N.L. Industries, British Petroleum, Ford Motor
Secretary of HHS Tommy G. Thompson	B.A., J.D., U. of Wisconsin	Attorney	Governor, WI, 87-00	Philip Morris, AOL Time Warner, General Electric, Merck
Secretary of Education Roderick Paige	B.A., Jackson State U.; M.A., Ph.D., U. of Indiana	Educator	Houston School Superintendent, 94-00	None
Secretary of Agriculture Ann M. Veneman	B.A., U.Cal.-Davis; J.D., U. Cal-Berkeley	Attorney	Dep't. Sect., Dept. of Agric., 81-93; Sect. of Agric. for CA, 95-99	Monsanto,* Pharmacia
Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham	B.A., Michigan State U; J.D., Harvard	Attorney	U.S. Senator, MI, 94-00	General Motors, Ford, Lear Corp., Daimler Chrysler

continued

TABLE 4-2 continued

<i>Position</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Career Highlights</i>	<i>Corporate Connections¹</i>
Secretary of VA Anthony Principi	B.A., U.S. Naval Acad.; J.D., Seton Hall	Attorney	U.S. Navy, 67–80; Dept. Sec't., VA, 89–93	Federal Network,* Lockheed Martin,* QTC Medical*
National Security Advisor Condoleeza Rice	B.A., U of Denver; M.A. Notre Dame; Ph.D., U. of Denver	Educator	Hoover Institute (think tank); Provost, Stanford U.	Chevron,* Charles Schwab,* TransAmerica*
Chief of Staff Andrew Card	B.S., U of South Carolina;	Lobbyist	State leg., MA, 75–82; Asst. to pres., 83–92; Sec't. of Transportation, 92; Pres., Automobile Mfgs. Assn., 92–00	General Motors,* Citigroup,* General Electric,* Merck*
Director, OMB Mitchell Daniels	B.A., Princeton; J.D., Georgetown	Drug co. exec.	V.P., Eli Lilly	Eli Lilly,* Citigroup,* General Electric,* Merck*

¹ Corporate connections provided by the Center for Responsive Politics. Connections include services as officer or director (shown with asterisk*), together with major stock holdings and/or heavy campaign contributions.

Business executives have returned to high places in Washington, after a relative absence during the Clinton years (see Table 4–3). Vice-President Richard Cheney served as president of the giant oil conglomerate, Halliburton; Secretary of Treasury Paul H. O’Neill was president of International Paper and later chairman and CEO of Alcoa; Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld (who also ran the Pentagon in the Ford administration) was president and CEO of the international drug company G.D. Searle; Secretary of Commerce Don Evans was an oil company executive; OMB Director Mitchell Daniels was vice-president of the giant drug company Eli Lilly; and White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card was president and chief lobbyist for the Automobile Manufacturers Association.

After a nearly complete absence of military experience at the top of the Clinton administration, Bush’s team includes four veterans: Former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Colin Powell is, of course, the most prominent military presence. Others who served tours of duty in the services include Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld (Navy), Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta (Army), and Anthony Principi (Navy). Even George W. himself served in the Texas Air National Guard, and former Wisconsin Governor and HUD Secretary Tommy Thompson served in the Army Reserve.

Yet it is also clear that Bush has tried to reach out and bring highly qualified minorities into his administration. Secretary of State Colin Powell was an easy choice; the popular General might have won the same office in a Gore

TABLE 4–3 Profile of Administration Leadership

	<i>Truman through Carter</i>	<i>Reagan</i>	<i>Bush</i>	<i>Clinton</i>	<i>Bush</i>
Education					
Advanced degree	69%	68%	80%	89%	83%
Law degree	40	26	40	67	50
Ivy League degree	48	58	50	50	28
Ph.D.	19	16	25	22	12
No college degree	0	0	0	0	0
Women	4%	5%	10%	17%	18%
Blacks	4%	5%	5%	17%	18%
Occupations					
Law	28%	11%	40%	5%	28%
Business	28	32	55	5	39
Government	16	16	5	67	6
Education	19	16	25	11	12
Military	3	5	10	0	12

Source: For Truman through Carter, see Phillip H. Burch, Jr., *Elites in American History*, Vol. 3 (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1980).

administration. Likewise, African American Condoleeza Rice was a highly qualified choice as National Security Adviser; she had established stellar credentials in the national security field (a field not occupied by many women) at the Hoover Institute and Stanford University. By placing African American Roderick Paige at the head of the Department of Education, Bush signaled that improvement of minority education would be a priority in his administration. As governor of Texas, Bush was more successful at bringing Hispanics into his top circles than most other Republican governors (with the possible exception of his brother Jeb Bush, Governor of Florida). Hispanics are well represented on the White House staff, and Mel Martinez heads up HUD.

Women occupy roughly the same proportion of top positions as they have in previous administrations. Three women head cabinet departments—Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao, Secretary of Interior Gale Norton, and Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman. And Condoleeza Rice’s appointment represents the real breakthrough for women on the National Security Council.

The quality of Bush’s initial appointments to top positions suggests that he is seeking legitimacy by bringing into high office people who have already won respect in business and government. The quality of his appointments and the authority he appears to have given them would be consistent with the image he projected in the campaign. He does not see himself as a policy expert, but openly acknowledges his dependence on getting good advice from knowledgeable people.

THE CONGRESSIONAL ESTABLISHMENT

Although policy initiatives are usually developed outside Congress, Congress is no mere “rubber stamp.” Key members of Congress do play an independent role in national decision-making; thus, key congressional leaders must be included in any operational definition of a national elite.

Political scientists have commented extensively on the structure of power *within* the Congress. They generally describe a hierarchical structure in both houses of the Congress—a “congressional establishment”—which largely determines what the Congress will do. The congressional establishment has survived periodic efforts at decentralization. It is composed of the Speaker of the House and president pro tempore of the Senate; House and Senate majority and minority leaders and whips; and committee chairpersons and ranking minority members of House and Senate standing committees. Party leadership roles in the House and Senate are major sources of power in Washington. The Speaker of the House and the majority and minority leaders of the House and Senate direct the business of Congress. Although they share this task with the standing committee chairpersons, these leaders are generally “first among equals” in their relationships with committee chairpersons.

TABLE 4-4 The Congressional Establishment 107th Congress (2001–2003)

<i>Senate Leadership</i>		
Majority Leader	Thomas Daschle (D-SD)	
Majority Whip	Henry Reid (D-NV)	
President pro tempore	Robert C. Byrd (D-WV)	
Republican Leader	Trent Lott (R-MS)	
Republican Whip	Don Nickles (R-OK)	
<i>House Leadership</i>		
Speaker of the House	Dennis Hastert (R-IL)	
Majority Leader	Dick Armey (R-TX)	
Majority Whip	Tom DeLay (R-TX)	
Minority Leader	Dick Gephardt (D-MO)	
Minority Whip	David Bonior (D-MI)	
<i>Key Senate Committees</i>		
	Democratic Chair	Republican Ranking
Appropriations	Byrd (WV)	Stevens (AK)
Foreign Relations	Biden (DE)	Helms (NC)
Judiciary	Leahy (VT)	Hatch (UT)
Finance	Baucus (MT)	Grassley (IA)
Armed Services	Levin (MI)	Warner (VA)
Budget	Conrad (ND)	Dominici (NM)
<i>Key House Committees</i>		
	Republican Chair	Democratic Ranking
Rules	Hansen (UT)	Rahall (WV)
Appropriations	Young (FL)	Obey (WI)
International Relations	Hyde (IL)	Lantos (CA)
Judiciary	Sensenbrenner (WI)	Conyers (MI)
Ways and Means	Thomas (CA)	Rangel (NY)
Armed Services	Stump (AZ)	Skelton (MO)
Budget	Nussle (IA)	Sporatt (SC)

But the committee system also creates powerful congressional figures, the chairpersons of the most powerful standing committees—particularly the Senate Foreign Relations, Appropriations, Judiciary, Finance, Armed Services, and Budget committees, and the House Rules, Appropriations, International Relations, Judiciary, Armed Services, Budget, and Ways and Means committees (see Table 4-4).

Viewed within the broader context of a *national elite*, congressional leaders appear “folksy,” parochial, and localistic. Because of the local constituency of members of Congress, they are predisposed to concern themselves with local interests. Members of Congress are part of local elite structures “back

home”; they retain their local businesses and law practices, club memberships, and religious affiliations. Members of Congress represent many small segments of the nation rather than the nation as a whole. Even top congressional leaders from safe districts, with many years of seniority, cannot completely shed their local interests. Their claim to *national* leadership must be safely hedged by attention to their local constituents. Consider, for example, the parochial backgrounds of the following top congressional leaders.

TED KENNEDY: THE POLITICAL INHERITOR

The Kennedy dynasty began with the flamboyant career of Joseph P. Kennedy, a son of a prosperous Irish saloon-keeper and ward boss in Boston. Joseph Kennedy attended Boston Latin School and Harvard, receiving his B.A. in 1912. He started his career in banking, moved into stock market operations, dabbled in shipbuilding, formed movie-making companies (RKO and later Paramount), and married the daughter of the mayor of Boston. “Old Joe” made the major part of his fortune in stock market manipulations. With his associate, William Randolph Hearst, Kennedy provided key financial backing for the 1932 presidential campaign of Franklin D. Roosevelt. FDR later made Kennedy head of the Securities and Exchange Commission. But making a market speculator head of a commission that was designed to protect investors caused such public outcry that Kennedy was forced to resign after one year. FDR then appointed Kennedy head of the Maritime Commission, but rumors of extravagant subsidies to shipbuilding friends forced his resignation after only two months on the job. In 1937, FDR appointed him ambassador to England. His diplomatic career lasted three years and ended over differences with FDR regarding U.S. assistance to the Allies. Old Joe is said to have advised FDR of the likelihood of German victory and the advantages of placating Hitler.

Joseph P. Kennedy, Sr., was the father of nine children. (Joseph P., Jr., was killed as a World War II Navy pilot; President John F. Kennedy was assassinated; Senator Robert F. Kennedy was assassinated; Kathleen died in a plane crash; Rosemary is living in an institution for the mentally retarded; Eunice is married to Sargent Shriver, former director of the Peace Corps and the War on Poverty and replacement for Senator Thomas Eagleton as the Democratic vice-presidential nominee in 1972; Patricia, formerly married to actor Peter Lawford; Jean, wife of Stephen Smith; and the youngest, Edward M. “Ted” Kennedy.)

Although born to great wealth and accustomed to an upper-class style of living (he received his first communion from Pope Pius XII), Ted Kennedy acquired the sense of competition fostered in the large Kennedy household. In 1951, suspended from Harvard for cheating on a Spanish examination, he joined the Army and served two years in Germany. He was

readmitted to Harvard, where he played on the Harvard football team and graduated in 1956.

Despite his family background, Harvard Law School rejected Ted Kennedy's application for admission. He enrolled instead in the University of Virginia Law School and completed his law degree in 1959. Following graduation and work on his brother's 1960 presidential campaign, he was appointed assistant district attorney for Suffolk County, Massachusetts.

When he was just thirty years old, the minimum age for a U.S. senator, he announced his candidacy for the Massachusetts Senate seat formerly held by his brother, who was then President. In the Democratic primary he faced Edward J. McCormack, nephew of the then Speaker of the House, John W. McCormack. During a televised debate, McCormack said to Kennedy, "You never worked for a living. You never held elective office. You lack the qualifications and maturity of judgment. . . . If your name were not Kennedy, your candidacy would be a joke." But Kennedy won overwhelmingly and went on to defeat the Republican candidate, George Cabot Lodge. (George Cabot Lodge was the son of U.S. Ambassador to South Vietnam and former U.S. Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr. In 1916, Kennedy's grandfather, Boston Mayor John F. Fitzgerald, had been defeated in a race for the same Senate seat by Lodge's great-grandfather, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge.)

Kennedy performed better in the Senate than many had expected. He cultivated Senate friends, appeared at fund-raising dinners, and informed himself about several important policy fields. He worked hard learning about national health problems and problems of the elderly. In 1969 he was elected Senate Democratic whip by his colleagues.

His personal life, however, was marred by accident, tragedy, and scandal. He nearly died in a 1964 plane crash in which he suffered a broken back. An athletic and handsome six foot two inches, Kennedy was frequently the object of romantic gossip at Washington cocktail parties. On July 19, 1969, a young woman, Mary Jo Kopechne, died when the car Kennedy was driving plunged off a narrow bridge on Chappaquiddick Island after a late-night party. Missing for ten hours after the accident, Kennedy later made a dramatic national television appearance, saying that the tragedy had been an accident and that he had been too confused to report the tragedy until the next day. The official inquest has been kept secret, and many feel that there are still unresolved discrepancies in Kennedy's story.¹⁰ Kennedy pled guilty to the minor charge of leaving the scene of an accident. Senate Democrats removed Kennedy from his position as majority whip. But the national news media never pressed the Chappaquiddick incident and continued favorable reporting of the still charismatic senator.

Kennedy deliberately avoided the Democratic presidential nomination in both 1972 and 1976. His advisers argued that the public's memory of

¹⁰ See Robert Sherrill, "Chappaquiddick + 5," *New York Times Magazine*, July 14, 1974.

Chappaquiddick was still too fresh for Kennedy to enter a campaign battle in which the issue of his personal life would certainly be raised. However, in late 1979, with Jimmy Carter standing at a near all-time low for presidents in the opinion polls, Kennedy announced his presidential candidacy. Most observers thought that Kennedy was unbeatable, but Carter was temporarily saved by the Iranian seizure of American embassy employees in Iran as hostages. Shortly thereafter, Soviet troops invaded neighboring Afghanistan. Support for the President was equated with support for America, and Carter benefited from a “rally round the flag” effect. The media focus was on the President, and the international news simply obliterated the Kennedy campaign. But Ted Kennedy reestablished his leadership of liberal Democrats and polished his own charismatic image with a dramatic and inspiring speech at the 1980 Democratic National Convention. It was clearly Ted Kennedy’s finest public performance.

Kennedy avoided subsequent presidential races, citing family affairs as his reason. And indeed, his family situation might have caused him political problems had he chosen to run. He was divorced from his wife, Joan, and many stories were published in women’s magazines portraying her as a victim of Ted’s heavy drinking and “womanizing.” At the same time, he felt responsible for the many sons and daughters of his deceased brother Robert as well as his own children. Several of these “third-generation” Kennedys suffered serious personal problems.¹¹

Kennedy’s personal life appeared to stabilize following his marriage to a Washington attorney in 1992. He won his seventh Senate term in 2000 with 73 percent of the vote in Massachusetts. The 2000 election produced a Senate evenly divided between Democrats and Republicans, and when Vermont’s Senator Jim Jeffords switched his affiliation to the Democratic Party in 2001, Kennedy assumed the chairmanship of the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee.

Clearly, Ted Kennedy is an inheritor rather than a climber in the world of politics. His success rests upon his image and style more than upon his substantive contributions to public policy. He was elected to the Senate solely because he was a Kennedy, an inheritor of a famous political image. The image survived tragedy and scandal, and he remains the recognized leader of the liberal wing of the Democratic party.

HILLARY CLINTON: POWER AND AMBITION

Hillary Rodham Clinton has scratched and clawed her way to power throughout her lifetime. Along the way she has endured personal humiliation and

¹¹ See Peter Collier and David Horowitz, *The Kennedys: An American Dream* (New York: Summit, 1984).

political defeat. Yet her brilliance, tenacity, and tough-mindedness have made her a leading political figure in the U.S. Senate and the nation.

Hillary Rodham grew up in suburban Chicago, the daughter of a wealthy businessman who sent his daughter to prestigious private Wellesley College. A “Goldwater Girl” in high school, Hillary quickly reversed political direction to become a leader in radical and antiwar politics on campus. A 1969 honors graduate with a counterculture image—horn-rimmed glasses, long straggling hair, no makeup—she was chosen by her classmates to give a commencement speech—a largely inarticulate rambling about “more immediate, ecstatic, and penetrating modes of living.” (Years later her views would coalesce around the New Age writings of leftist Jewish thinker Michael Learner, who coined the phrase *the politics of meaning*.) At Yale Law School, she met a long-haired, bearded Rhodes scholar from Arkansas, Bill Clinton, who was even more politically ambitious than Hillary. Both Bill and Hillary received their law degrees in 1973, but Bill returned to Arkansas to build a career in state politics, while Hillary went to Washington as an attorney, first for the liberal lobbying group the Children’s Defense Fund, and later for the staff of the House Judiciary Committee seeking to impeach President Nixon.

Hillary and other Yale grads traveled to Arkansas to help Bill run unsuccessfully for Congress in 1974. Hillary decided to stay with Bill in Little Rock; they married before his next campaign, a successful run for state attorney general in 1976. Hillary remained Hillary Rodham, even as her husband went on to the governorship in 1978. She taught briefly at the University of Arkansas Law School and eventually joined Little Rock’s influential Rose law firm. She kept her Washington ties with the Children’s Defense Fund. She also became a director of Wal-Mart Stores, TCBY Enterprises, the LaFarge Corporation, and the federal government’s Legal Services Corporation. Her husband’s 1980 defeat for reelection as governor was blamed on his liberal leanings; in his 1982 comeback Bill cut his hair and repackaged himself as a moderate and centrist. Hillary cooperated by becoming Mrs. Bill Clinton, shedding her hornrims for contacts, blinding her hair, and echoing her husband’s more moderate line. These tactics helped propel them back into the governor’s mansion.

Hillary was far from the traditional governor’s wife. She chaired the governor’s task force on education and drew up his key educational reform package. She became a full partner in the Rose law firm, regularly earning over \$200,000 a year (while Bill earned only \$35,000 as Arkansas governor). She won national recognition as one of the “100 most influential lawyers in the United States” according to the American National Law Journal. She chaired the American Bar Association’s Commission on Women and the Profession.

Hillary’s support for Bill’s presidential ambitions was absolutely crucial to this success. Married life in the governor’s mansion was at best “rocky,” as Bill and Hillary would later acknowledge on national television. Rumors of Bill’s “womanizing” had long circulated in Little Rock, and they broke into

the national news early in the presidential race when Genifer Flowers held a press conference describing a long-term affair with the governor and playing tapes of their telephone conversations. The focus was on Hillary in an interview on *60 Minutes* in early 1992. In a very convincing performance, Hillary acknowledged that their marriage had been “shaky” but was “rock solid” now.

Hillary’s prominent role in the Clinton presidency was no surprise to those who followed her career. Her social consciousness, upper-class liberalism, and “burning desire to make the world better for everybody” were evident in her early radical critique of the “prevailing acquisitive and competitive corporate life” in America. Her “politics of meaning” combine a progressive social agenda with a strong dose of moralism. Reportedly very influential in all aspects of the Clinton presidency, she undertook the leadership of the President’s Task Force on Health Care Reform in 1993. However, the defeat of Hillary’s health-care plan caused her temporarily to assume a less public role in Washington politics. In her 1996 book, *It Takes A Village*, she advocated universal health-care, gun control, a higher minimum wage, and a federal overhaul of the nation’s educational system. She received an \$8 million advance for her autobiography just prior to leaving the White House.

During the Monica Lewinsky affair in 1998, Hillary again “stood by her man.” Reportedly, she initially believed Bill’s denials; she issued a statement blaming the reports of the affair on “a vast right-wing conspiracy.” Later, on learning the truth, she appeared angry and upset, yet she declined to publicly criticize her husband. Indeed, her support for Bill was no doubt critical to his remaining in office. Her popularity with the American people reached an all-time high during the affair and the subsequent impeachment proceedings. She was widely admired by women for her steadfastness under pressure.

In 2000 Hillary became the first First Lady to run for public office—the New York Senate seat vacated by retiring Democrat Daniel Patrick Moynihan. When New York City’s Republican Mayor, Rudolph Guliani, dropped out of the race, Hillary faced a relative unknown, Congressman Rick Lazio. Nevertheless, the nationally spotlighted race set a new record in campaign spending. Hillary won comfortably with 55 percent of the vote. She rates high in presidential preference polls among Democrats, but she may not make a run for the White House until 2008.

THE JUDGES

Nine people—none of whom is elected and all of whom serve for life—possess ultimate authority over all the other institutions of government. The Supreme Court of the United States has the authority to void the acts of popularly elected Presidents and Congresses. There is no appeal from their decision about what is the “supreme law of the land,” except perhaps to undertake the difficult task of amending the Constitution itself. Only the good judgment of

the Justices—their sense of “judicial self-restraint”—limits their power. It was the Supreme Court, rather than the President or Congress, that took the lead in important issues such as eliminating segregation from public life, ensuring voter equality in representation, limiting the powers of police, and declaring abortion to be a fundamental right of women.

Social scientists have commented frequently on the class bias of Supreme Court Justices: “White; generally Protestant . . . ; fifty to fifty-five years of age at the time of his appointment; Anglo-Saxon ethnic stock . . . ; high social status; reared in an urban environment; member of a civic-minded, politically active, economically comfortable family; legal training; some type of public office; generally well educated.”¹² No blacks had served on the Supreme Court until the appointment of Associate Justice Thurgood Marshall in 1967. No women had served until the appointment of Sandra Day O’Connor in 1981. (See Table 4–5.) Of course, social background does not necessarily determine judicial philosophy. But as John R. Schmidhauser observes, “If . . . the Supreme Court is the keeper of the American conscience, it is essentially the conscience of the American upper-middle class sharpened by the imperative of individual social responsibility and political activism, and conditioned by the conservative impact of legal training and professional attitudes and associations.”¹³

Clarence Thomas: Up from Pinpoint. Not all Justices, however, conform to the upper-class portrait. No member of the nation’s governing elite has ever had a steeper climb to the top than Justice Clarence Thomas. Born to a teenage mother who earned \$10 a week as a maid, Clarence Thomas and his brother lived in a dirt-floor shack in Pinpoint, Georgia, where they were raised by strict, hard-working grandparents who taught young Clarence the value of education and sacrificed to send him to a Catholic school. He excelled academically and went on to mostly white Immaculate Conception Seminary College in Missouri to study for the Catholic priesthood. But when he overheard a fellow seminarian express satisfaction at the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Thomas left the seminary in anger and enrolled at Holy Cross College, where he helped found the college’s Black Student Union, and went on to graduate with honors and win admission to Yale Law School.

Upon graduating from Yale, Thomas took a job as assistant attorney general working in Missouri and, after a brief stint as an attorney for the Monsanto Corporation, returned to government as a congressional aide to Republican Missouri Senator John Danforth. Despite misgivings about accepting a “black” post in government, in 1981 Thomas accepted the post as head of the Office of Civil Rights in the Department of Education, using the posi-

¹² Henry Abraham, *The Judicial Process* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 58.

¹³ John R. Schmidhauser, *The Supreme Court* (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1960), p. 59.

TABLE 4–5 Backgrounds of Supreme Court Justices

<i>All U.S. Supreme Court Justices, 1789 to Present</i>	<i>Number of Justices (Total = 109)</i>
Occupation before Appointment	
Private legal practice	25
State judgeship	22
Federal judgeship	27
U.S. attorney general	7
Deputy or assistant U.S. attorney general	2
U.S. solicitor general	2
U.S. senator	6
U.S. representative	2
State governor	3
Federal executive posts	10
Other	3
Religious Background	
Protestant	85
Roman Catholic	9
Jewish	7
Unitarian	7
No religious affiliation	1
Age on Appointment	
Under 40	4
41–50	30
51–60	59
61–70	15
Political Party Affiliation	
Federalist (to 1835)	13
Democrat-Republican (to 1828)	7
Whig (to 1861)	2
Democrat	45
Republican	42
Sex	
Male	107
Female	2
Race	
Caucasian	107
Other	2

Sources: Congressional Quarterly, *Congressional Quarterly's Guide to the U.S. Supreme Court* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, 1979); and *Congressional Quarterly's Guide to Government*, Spring 1983 (Washington, D.C., 1982). Updated to 2001 by author.

tion to speak out on self-reliance, self-discipline, and the value of education. In 1982, he was named chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), where he successfully eliminated much of that agency's financial mismanagement and aggressively pursued individual cases of discrimination. At the same time, he spoke out against racial "quotas" and imposed minority hiring goals only on employers with proven records of

discrimination. In 1989, President Bush nominated him to the U.S. Court of Appeals and he was easily confirmed by the Senate.

In tapping Thomas for the Supreme Court, the Bush White House reasoned that the liberal groups who had blocked the earlier nomination of conservative Robert Bork would be reluctant to launch personal attacks on an African American. But during nationally televised hearings of the Senate Judiciary Committee, University of Oklahoma law professor Anita Hill, a former legal assistant to Thomas both at the Department of Education and later at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, contacted the staff of the Judiciary Committee with charges that Thomas had sexually harassed her in both jobs. Initially, Hill declined to make her charges public, but when Senator Joseph Biden, the committee chairman, refused to circulate anonymous charges, she agreed to be interviewed by the F.B.I. and went on to give a nationally televised press conference, elaborating on her charges against Thomas. Her bombshell became a media extravaganza and sent the Senate into an uproar.

The Judiciary Committee reopened its hearings, with televised emotional testimony from both Anita Hill and Clarence Thomas. Indeed, the confirmation process exploded into a sleazy soap opera, with lurid stories about pubic hairs, penis sizes, and pornographic films of women with animals. The only restraint was Chairman Biden's rule that no questions would be asked about either Clarence Thomas's or Anita Hill's sex life. But the damage was done anyway, not only to Clarence Thomas and Anita Hill, but to the Senate confirmation process and the Senate as an institution.

In the end, there was no objective way to determine who was telling the truth. Too often the truth in Washington is determined by opinion polls. An astonishing 86 percent of the general public said they had watched the televised hearings. A majority of blacks as well as whites, and a majority of women as well as men, sided with Clarence Thomas.¹⁴ The final Senate confirmation vote was 52 to 48, the closest vote in the history of Supreme Court confirmations.

Sandra Day O'Connor: In the Center of the Court. For nearly 200 years the U.S. Supreme Court was America's most exclusive male club. After 101 male justices, Sandra Day O'Connor was named to the Supreme Court by President Reagan in 1981. At the time of her appointment, O'Connor was a fifty-one-year-old state appellate court judge in Arizona. Justice O'Connor had no previous experience as a federal court judge, but she had the active support of Arizona's senior U.S. senator and Republican warhorse, Barry Goldwater. More important, she was a "she." Reagan was anxious to deflect attacks on his opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment and his failure to appoint many women in his own administration. As one Reagan aide put it: "This is

¹⁴ Gallup Opinion Reports, October 15, 1991, p. 209.

worth twenty-five assistant secretaries, maybe more!” Feminist groups were forced to support the appointment, even though O’Connor’s record in Arizona was moderately conservative.

Sandra Day grew up on her family’s large Arizona ranch, graduated from Stanford with honors, and then went on to Stanford Law School. She finished near the top of her class, along with Chief Justice of the Supreme Court William Rehnquist (who was first in the class). She married John Jay O’Connor, a Phoenix attorney, and raised three sons. She entered Arizona politics about the time her youngest son entered school. She was appointed to the Arizona State Senate in 1969 and was later elected twice to that body. She rose to majority leader in 1973. She left the Arizona legislature in 1975 to become a Phoenix trial judge. In 1979, she was appointed by a Democratic governor to the Arizona Court of Appeals. Work on this state intermediate court, however, does not involve major constitutional questions.

O’Connor had some business experience; she was formerly a director of the First National Bank of Arizona and Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Arizona. But until her appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court, she was an obscure state court judge. Her service as a Republican leader in the Arizona State Senate qualified her as a moderately conservative party loyalist. However, it appears that her professional and political friendships had more to do with bringing her to President Reagan’s attention than her record as a jurist. She had known Justice William Rehnquist since her law school days. She had known former Chief Justice Warren Burger for a long time. And Barry Goldwater had been her mentor in Arizona Republican politics. When Reagan’s political advisers told him during the presidential campaign that he was not doing well among women voters, the candidate responded by pledging to appoint a woman to the Supreme Court. Reagan’s fulfillment of his campaign pledge was a politically popular decision.

In recent years Sandra Day O’Connor has emerged as the leader of a middle bloc of votes on the High Court, mediating between the liberal and conservative blocs. O’Connor has taken the lead in shaping Supreme Court policy on women’s issues—including abortion. O’Connor strongly reaffirmed a woman’s fundamental right to abortion, yet recognized a state’s interest in protecting a “viable” fetus (a late-term fetus capable of surviving outside of the womb).¹⁵ She has also taken the lead in deciding Supreme Court policy in the controversial area of affirmative action, arguing that laws that distinguish between individuals based on their race must be narrowly tailored to remedy specific injustices. “Racial classifications of any sort pose the risk of lasting harm to our society. They reinforce the belief, held by too many for too much of our history, that individuals should be judged by the color of their skin.”¹⁶

¹⁵ *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* (1992).

¹⁶ *Shaw v. Reno* (1993).

THE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT

In his farewell address to the nation in 1961, President Dwight D. Eisenhower warned of “an immense military establishment and a large arms industry.” He observed: “In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex.”

The phrase *the military-industrial complex* caught on with many commentators over the years. It implied that a giant network of defense contractors—for example, Lockheed Aircraft, General Dynamics, Rockwell, McDonnell Douglas, Boeing, Litton, Hughes Tool, Grumman Aircraft—together with members of Congress in whose districts their plants were located, conspired with the generals in the Pentagon to create a powerful force in governmental and corporate circles. Indeed, radical social commentators held the military-industrial complex responsible for war and “imperialism.”

But whatever the power of defense contractors and the military at the height of the Cold War, their influence today in governing circles is miniscule. Indeed, their goal today is to avoid complete dismantlement. Spending for national defense has declined precipitously from 10 percent of the GNP in the Eisenhower and Kennedy years to less than 3 percent today. Spending on Social Security, Medicare, and welfare, including Medicaid, exceeds 58 percent of the federal budget, compared to 16 percent for national defense.¹⁷ There are 2 million civilian employees of the federal government, compared to only 1.4 million people in the armed forces. The long-term decline of U.S. defense spending suggests that the American military-industrial complex was *not* a very powerful conspiracy.

It seems clear in retrospect that C. Wright Mills placed too much importance on the military in his work, *The Power Elite*.¹⁸ Mills was writing in the early 1950s when military prestige was high following victory in World War II. After the war, a few high-level military men were recruited to top corporate positions to add prestige to corporate boards. But this practice ended in the 1960s. The contrast between the political prestige of the military in the post-World War II years and in the post-Vietnam years is striking: The Supreme Allied Commander in Europe in World War II, Dwight D. Eisenhower, was elected President of the United States; the U.S. Commander in Vietnam, William Westmoreland, was defeated in his bid to become governor of South Carolina! Moreover, in contrast with corporate and governmental elites, military officers do *not* come from the upper or upper-middle class of society. Military officers are more likely to be recruited from lower- and

¹⁷ *Budget of the United States Government 2001* gives this breakdown by function: Social Security: 23.2%; Medicare: 12.0%; Income Security: 14.2%; Medicaid: 9.1%.

¹⁸ C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite* (New York: Oxford, 1956).

lower-middle-class backgrounds, and more likely to have rural and southern roots than are corporate or governmental elites.¹⁹

Colin Powell: Soldier-Statesman. When General Colin Powell was named chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff by President George Bush in 1989, he became the first African American and the youngest man in history to hold that post. During the Gulf War General Powell oversaw the largest military deployment of American troops since the Vietnam War. He is credited with developing and implementing a doctrine of maximum force that kept U.S. casualties to a minimum while Saddam Hussein's army was routed from Kuwait and destroyed. Powell had previously served as national security adviser to President Ronald Reagan, making him a principal military adviser to three Presidents.

Born in Harlem to Jamaican immigrant parents, Powell recounts his youth as proof that "it is possible to rise above conditions." After his graduation from Morris High School in the South Bronx, Powell's parents encouraged him to attend college, and he enrolled at City College of New York on an ROTC scholarship. He graduated with a degree in geology in 1958 at the top of his ROTC class and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army. Powell went to South Vietnam as a military adviser in 1962 and returned for a second tour in 1968. In Vietnam he was awarded two Purple Hearts for wounds suffered in combat, and a Bronze Star and the Legion of Merit for valor under fire.

Powell returned to the classroom in 1972 and earned a master's degree in business administration from George Washington University. In 1972 he was appointed to the prestigious White House Fellows Program and was assigned to the Office of Management and Budget, where he worked under Caspar Weinberger, who later became secretary of defense in the Reagan administration. Powell's career was on a fast track after this early White House duty. He served as a battalion commander in Korea, graduated from the National War College, served as military assistant to the deputy secretary of defense, and won promotion to general and command of the Second Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division.

In 1983 Powell was recalled to Washington by Defense Secretary Weinberger to become his senior military adviser. During the invasion of Grenada in October 1983, Powell was assigned the task of running interference for the military against meddling White House and National Security Council staff. Later Powell supported Secretary Weinberger in opposing arms sales to Iran; he was overruled by President Reagan, but his memo urging that Congress be notified of the arms transfers would later stand him in good stead with the Congress after the Iran-Contra scandal became public. In 1986 Powell eagerly accepted command of the U.S. Fifth Corps in Germany, declin-

¹⁹ Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier* (New York: Free Press, 1960), p. 378.

ing offers to stay on in Washington. But when President Reagan himself called and urged him to accept the post as national security adviser and reform the operations of the NSC staff, he agreed. Powell lent credibility to Reagan's promises to implement the recommendations of the Tower Commission, which had investigated the Iran-Contra affair.

President Bush chose General Powell in 1989 to be Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff—the nation's highest military position. It was General Powell who helped convince the President that if military force were to be used to oust Saddam Hussein from Kuwait, it should be overwhelming and decisive force, not gradual limited escalation, as in Vietnam. Powell “ran interference” in Washington for the field commander, General Norman Schwarzkopf. Powell's televised briefings during the course of the war, together with those of General Schwarzkopf, assured the American people of the competence and effectiveness of the U.S. military. He summed up U.S. military strategy toward the Iraqi Army in Kuwait: “First we're going to cut it off. Then we're going to kill it.” Under Powell's leadership, the U.S. military achieved a brilliant victory in the Gulf War with precious few casualties.

Powell retired from the Army in 1993, inspiring speculation that the popular general might enter the political arena. Throughout his military career, Powell avoided partisan affiliation. Registered as a political independent, Powell always considered himself a soldier first. Powell credits his success to those who “suffered and sacrificed to create the conditions and set the stage for me.”²⁰

Early in 1996, public opinion polls showed Powell leading all other candidates for president, including incumbent Bill Clinton. But Powell steadfastly refused to become a candidate. Rather, he founded an organization, Alliance for Youth, dedicated to helping disadvantaged youngsters. In the 2000 presidential election he endorsed George W. Bush, the son of his old Boss. He declined to join the Republican ticket as vice-president, but he accepted the position of Secretary of State.

SUMMARY

Governmental power is even more concentrated than corporate and financial power in America. All government expenditures now account for about 30 percent of the GDP, and *federal* expenditures account for nearly two-thirds of all government expenditures. America's booming economy of the 1990s actually grew faster than government expenditures, causing a modest decline in the size of government spending relative to the economy. Yet government regulations continue to multiply.

Governmental elites include both elected politicians and appointed

²⁰ Colin Powell, *My American Journey* (New York: Random House, 1995), p. 12.

executives, as well as the “fat cat” campaign contributors who keep them in office. The costs of running for public office rise with each election cycle. The result is that campaign contributors become ever more important and powerful in politics. The top contributors from the corporate, banking, and investment worlds are those listed among the largest and most powerful institutions in those sectors of society. Campaign contributions from labor unions give these institutions more power in politics than they currently enjoy in the economy itself.

While a significant number of top political leaders have inherited wealth and power, most have climbed the ladder from relative obscurity to political success. The Kennedys and Bushes inherited great wealth and power, but Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton, and many others climbed to prominence from relatively modest backgrounds. Bill Clinton’s biography contrasts notably from the biographies of members of the Bush family dynasty.

The politicians’ principal talent is running for office; most appointed executives, on the other hand, have had some experience in running large public or private organizations. Running for office is not the same as running a government. Presidents must depend on “serious” people to run government. Skill in campaigning does not necessarily prepare individuals for the responsibility of governing. Key government executives must be recruited from industry, finance, the law, universities, and the bureaucracy itself. These serious people do not appear to differ much in background or education from Republican to Democratic administrations.

Congress seldom initiates programs, but rather it responds to the initiatives of the President, the executive departments, influential interest groups, and the mass media. Power *within* Congress is concentrated in the House and Senate leadership and in the chairperson and ranking minority members of the standing committees. Compared to other national elites, congressional leaders appear localistic. Their claim to national leadership must be safely hedged by attention to their local constituencies. Even national figures, such as Ted Kennedy and Hillary Rodham Clinton, must attend to their states’ concerns. Most members of Congress are recruited from very modest, middle-class backgrounds.

The Supreme Court is the most elitist branch of government. Its nine members are not elected, and they serve life terms. They have the authority to void the acts of popularly elected Presidents and Congresses. It was the Supreme Court, rather than the President or Congress, that took the lead in eliminating segregation from public life, ensuring voter equality in representation, limiting the powers of police, and declaring abortion to be a fundamental right of women. Although most Justices have been upper class in social origin, their appointment has generally been related to their political activities rather than to their experience in the law.