PRESIDENTIAL LAMEDUCK PERFORMANCE

An Honors Thesis (ID 499)

by

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On February 26, 1951, the Twenty-second Amendment to the United States Constitution was ratified. The amendment states, "No person shall be elected to the office of the President more than twice...."

This amendment has frequently come under attack because of the constraints it puts on the President. These constraints are especially severe on a President during his lame duck term, or that period just before the President is about to leave office.

Usually, this occurs between the loss of an election and when the new President takes over. However, this also occurs when a second term President steps down.

Perhaps, for this paper, the word "retirement" should be used for "lame duck." Richard Nixon never had a lame duck period technically. However, there was a period of time before his resignation in 1974 when he had the same problems, though as will be seen, to a greater degree, than other Presidents during the term before they retire.

The lame duck Presidency has been around longer than since 1951 though. Every President since George Washington has had a lame duck period, except for the eight Presidents who died in office. These constraints are not the fault of the Twenty-second Amendment entirely. This just puts a time limit on when the President would face it.

Due to the length that would have to be taken to examine all thirty-one President's retirement terms, this paper will concentrate on just seven: William Howard Taft, Calvin Coolidge, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Lyndon Baines Johnson, Richard Nixon,
Gerald R. Ford, and James Earl Carter.

These seven Presidents represent the four character classifications which James David Barber has put the Presidents since Theodore Roosevelt in: Active-positive, active-negative, Passive-positive, and Passive-negative. Two are represented from each category except the passive-positives of which there is only one.

The purpose of this paper then, is to take these seven Presidents, identify their character classification, and see if their character shifted during their retirement term. The behavior during the retirement period will also be compared with the others to see if one character type is more successful than the others during the retirement term. Then, some possible reasons for the differences will be offered. Perhaps first, the constraints a President faces during this time should be identified.

During the retirement term, a President faces basically the same problems he has faced his entire term. The difference is that his power to deal with problems is greatly weakened. So, the real problem is a, "virtual absence of any incentives on the part of Congress, the bureaucracy, or the Cabinet to cooperate with the President." Little usually gets done in this period because either the President doesn't want to, or he can't because Congress won't let him.

One reason of these constraints could be that the President had just been defeated, and Congress is reluctant to
support him on anything important. Another reason could be that the President doesn't feel he should encroach on his successor's program. More of these will be discussed later.

WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT

William Howard Taft was President from 1908-1912. Barber said that Taft was a passive-positive President. Passive-positives are receptive, compliant and other directed. They don't like conflict. They are in politics for affection and affection is a reward for being agreeable and cooperative, not assertive. They are passive because they are responders, not initiators. They "go about their work with a different demeanor, an appearance of affectionate friendliness. They accentuate the positive. They boast. They sympathize." However, politics usually turns out to be a disappointment for them when they don't get the affection they want, or when those they trust turn out to be less than trustworthy. So, Barber called them the "nice guys who finished first, only to discover that not everyone is a nice guy."

Thus was Taft. He was the epitome of propriety. He was a "genial, agreeable, friendly, compliant person, much in need of affection from wife, family, and friends." He, however, had few intimate friends, although he had many friends who were not close. This fits the passive-positive type.

Taft was a progressive Republican with a very legal mind. So it is no wonder that Taft's greatest accomplishments
had to do with the law. During his term, he helped bring 22 civil suits and 45 criminal indictments involving antitrust, a record better than Theodore Roosevelt's.  

Other accomplishments include the first tariff reform since 1897, advances in railroad regulation, conservation, the near completion of the Panama Canal, the establishment of the Department of Labor and the strengthening of the Pure Food and Drugs Act. He also regulated corporate campaign contributions, provided for a Children's Bureau, passed a white slave act, and appointed excellent choices for judgeships. 

In 1912, Taft was defeated for the Presidency for a second term by Woodrow Wilson. He then entered his retirement term.

Taft's retirement term seems to correspond to the rest of his term. He held a passive-positive character all the way through. He stood firm against intervention in Mexico after the coup. He also saw the passage of the Sixteenth Amendment, providing for a federal income tax, which he had fought for. He still lacked the drive required for an "active" President. He was still a responder to events and not an initiator.

Here, I think his lack of real accomplishments stems from his character, not out of an uncooperative Congress. He let things remain for Wilson when he took over.
Taft's disappointment came from Theodore Roosevelt. He had always admired Roosevelt and did everything he could to please him. Roosevelt became very cool to Taft not long after he took office. Roosevelt thought Taft was becoming too conservative, and he fought him for the nomination, and, unable to get that, ran against him and Wilson in the general election. This could have, and undoubtedly did, contribute to Wilson's victory.

Taft was very disturbed and disappointed by Roosevelt's attitude toward him. Eventually, he even developed some animosity toward him, saying that the defeat of Roosevelt was all that mattered in the election. He was not bitter to Wilson or his own defeat. Shortly before leaving office, he wrote that he was satisfied with what he had accomplished. "I have held the office of President once...so I am content to retire from it with a consciousness that I have done the best I could, and have accomplished a good deal in one way or another. I have strengthened the Supreme Court...have not interfered with business, have kept the peace....It is a very humdrum, uninteresting administration, and it does not attract the attention or enthusiasm of anybody...." 9 This seems to me to be a statement of a passive-positive President and I think his actions bear it out.

CALVIN COOLIDGE

Calvin Coolidge became President upon Warren Harding's death in 1923 and was President until 1929. He was, according to Barber, a passive-negative President. 10
Passive-negatives are like passive-positives in that they are responders to situations, they are shaped by their environment, they don't shape it. Passive-negatives make "breathing spells, times of recovery in our frantic political life." Their elections represent a public sigh of relief after a period when the apparent aggressiveness or corruption of politics has worn down the people's political energies.\textsuperscript{11}

They are reluctant and often unwilling to enter politics. They do so only out of a sense of duty. He feels he must do so, so he does. The passive-negative President is compensating for feelings of uselessness by becoming a guardian of the right and proper way, above the sordid politicking of lesser men.\textsuperscript{12} He simply doesn't like politics and so he sees it as a necessary evil, something that must be tolerated.

This description fits Coolidge to a tee. He slept an average of eleven hours a day. Much of his waking time was spent in silent contemplation. As Barber said, his "strength was not effort but patience." He also liked to decentralize authority. He would divide up the work and resented it when those he gave the work to pestered him with details. He rarely interfered with others and didn't like people interfering with him.\textsuperscript{13} Even so, he claimed he didn't enjoy being President because of all the demands placed on him.\textsuperscript{14}

Coolidge is best known for his economic plan which helped lead the United States into one of the biggest booms in history. Even this though was not Coolidge's doing. His
Secretary of the Treasury, Andrew Mellon, was the one instrumental in the plan. Coolidge supported him and signed the bill when it came to his desk. Coolidge did very little initiating on his own. He did send the U.S. Marines into Nicaragua to support its President in a civil war in 1926. But apart from that and the forging of some treaties (even here, he didn't initiate most of them) his administration seemed to be one of the President letting the Cabinet and Congress run the country, while he did the administrative work, such as signing bills. Basically, few tangible accomplishments were made.

This was not entirely Coolidge's fault however. "Coolidge's desire for disengagement from congressional battles was matched by a congressional reluctance to take new initiatives."

"The lack of a dynamic opposition, the absence of an alternative program (both Houses in Congress were Republicans, as Coolidge was), continued poor Congressional leadership, the soothing effect of prosperity, and a non-aggressive president combined to assure the desire for change and relegated politics to only a secondary importance." 15

Coolidge's retirement term was identical to his previous five years. He showed little or no initiative, he was a responder to events. He also maintained his same aloofness toward politics.

When analyzing the performance of Presidents, it is sometimes more important to look at what he did not do as opposed to what he did do. This is especially true of the
passive-negative Presidents. He didn't increase taxes and use the money for expensive domestic or defense plans. He kept stressing the need for reductions in taxation and spending. His calm, confident approach to the Presidency provided a "breathing spell" for a nation ridden with the scandals of the Harding Administration. He brought trust and confidence back to the White House. This approach stayed with him until the day he departed from the White House.

**Dwight D. Eisenhower**

President Eisenhower, like Calvin Coolidge, was placed in the passive-negative classification by Barber. However, he did not fit the passive-negative characteristics as well as Coolidge. Eisenhower was more optimistic and more active than was Coolidge. However, like Coolidge, he found patronage nauseating. He had a distinct disdain for politics. Time and time again, Eisenhower complained when he had to appear on television or make a political speech. He would finally concede to a speech of "no more than twenty minutes."  

Although he was more active than Coolidge, Eisenhower still could not really be called anything but passive. He stayed out of congressional squabbles, and, like Coolidge, let his Cabinet run their own departments. He had a bad temper that would occasionally flare when he was asked a question by a Cabinet Secretary about a detail of some project. Eisenhower wasn't supposed to run the departments, the Cabinet was, seemed to be Eisenhower's rule of thumb. He "took strong
stands against the suggestion that he take a strong stand.\textsuperscript{17} An example is the desegregation issue. Eisenhower believed the national government should not get involved, and he did not like it when people tried to rush him into involvement with it.

Like other passive-negative Presidents, Eisenhower became President because of a sense of duty. "Dutiful sentiments which would sound false coming from most political leaders ring true from Eisenhower."\textsuperscript{18} He believed it when people urged him to run for President because the country needed him.

Throughout Eisenhower's term he faced a hostile Democratic Congress. Because of this, he had to careful how he got his programs through. He would gently persuade them by writing hundreds of letters to influential people and asking them to write Congress to support him. An example is his Defense Department Reorganization Bill of 1952.\textsuperscript{19}

He had other successes as well. He started the federal highway program, the St. Lawrence Gateway was authorized, he liberalized unemployment insurance, and he got a $7 billion tax cut early in his administration.

The single most difficult legislative item confronting presidents is foreign aid. Eisenhower managed to get several of these of $4 billion through Congress. (In 1967, Johnson, with huge Democratic majorities could only get a $2.295 billion program through.)\textsuperscript{20} Other accomplishments include the creation of the HEW Department and an end to the Korean War.
To end the Middle East and Korean crises, he used similar tactics. In the Middle East crisis, he sent a large force of ships and planes to scare them. The crisis lasted less than one month. In Korea, he threatened that if the war didn't end soon, all limits on targets and weapons would be off. He believed that if power was to be used, use as much as will be necessary right away. Soon after his threat, peace talks began. 21

Eisenhower's retirement period was much like Coolidge's. He unceasingly called for more spending reductions to offset rising deficits. He proposed a balanced budget in his final State of the Union message. In a departure from the "leave it to the next administration" attitude, he cut off all diplomatic relations with Cuba in January of 1961. At the same time, he asked for world peace.

As said earlier, it is sometimes as important to look at what a President does not do as what he does do. He didn't get us involved in Vietnam as his successors would, or a long conflict in the Middle East. He used his veto power to curb spending, and thus deficit spending and inflation. And he was very effective with this. From 1952-1959, Eisenhower didn't have a single veto overridden. Then, it was broken by a typical pork barrel bill. 22

Part of Eisenhower's success loomed from his popularity. In the Gallup Poll, his popularity went from 49% for a single
month, to 79%. No President since him has enjoyed the kind of sustained popularity that Eisenhower enjoyed. Even during his retirement term, his approval rating was up near 60%.\(^2^3\) Also, Eisenhower commanded a lot of respect in Washington because of his tenacity and skill.\(^2^7\) Because Washington had really no reason to oppose Eisenhower, he had little trouble with them during his retirement term.

Eisenhower's performance during his retirement term grew out of his character. He seems to have believed that he had fulfilled his duty and there was no reason to try and make a place for himself in history during his retirement term. He had accomplished much of what he set out to do, so he remained the same type character during his retirement as before.

**LYNDON JOHNSON**

Lyndon Johnson became President due to the assassination of President Kennedy in November of 1963. Barber has placed Johnson in the active-negative category.\(^2^5\)

Active-negatives put forth much effort but get little or no emotional reward for it. They are compulsive—as if trying to make up for something or to escape from anxiety into hard work. They are taken up with self concern, have a denial of self-gratification and control their aggression. When confronted with tough decisions, they have a temptation to either fight or quit. The danger of this kind of President is their rigid adherence to a failing line of policy.\(^2^6\)
This description fits Johnson very well. He was a walking energy plant. He would get up at 7:00 am and end his day sometime in the early morning of the next day. He was a very ambitious and power seeking man since his early political life. But with all this energy he put forth, much of the time he was discouraged, especially when his policy on Vietnam was being attacked.

Johnson's list of successes is a long one. His Great Society program offered: Medicare for the old, education assistance for the young, tax rebates for business, higher minimum wages, subsidies for farmers, vocational training, food for the hungry, poverty grants, clean highways, legal protection for blacks, conservation, etc., etc., etc. And it doesn't include his tax cut, the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act.

Part of Johnson's early legislative success came from the fact that he called his programs the "Kennedy Program" and appealed to Congress' emotions. This success also stemmed from his elaborate network of leaders and Congressmen he courted for their support.

Johnson's rigid policy stance came from the Vietnam War. Doris Kearns says that Johnson's decision to escalate the war was inevitable - given Johnson's nature and convictions. He believed that a Communist victory would be disastrous for the U.S. and that we could and should do something to save South Vietnam.
Johnson controlled the information about the cost and losses of the war because he felt that Congress should refer to him on matters of foreign policy, just as he had done to President Eisenhower when he was Senate Majority Leader. As this information was discovered, and as the economy started to slide, people began criticizing the war. The more people criticized, the more he became and the more he stuck to his policy that wasn't working.13

With this came congressional rebellion. "Month by month President Johnson's control over Congress weakened." He won Congress' approval on a few bills— Truth in Packaging, a measure creating the Department of Transportation, the first auto safety regulations, and the model cities program. "Generally, he asked for little and got less."34

Johnson's retirement was a little different than other President's. His began in March of 1968 when he made his speech to deescalate the war and retire from politics. More than any other President mentioned so far, Johnson faced a hostile Congress, press and public going into his retirement term. The main reason for his withdrawal was the animosity toward him. His popularity was at an all time low, although this improved somewhat after his announcement to deescalate the war.

With all this going against him, he wasn't a typical lame duck President. "Never was he the mere lame duck. Still endlessly stalking the Oval Office, he kept doing things,
seeking to shore up his domestic achievements and to bring
his foreign policy one step further along what he considered
a proper path.\textsuperscript{35} Up until the end Johnson had the say about
foreign policy. Congress could not find someone with enough
power and influence to stay his hand.\textsuperscript{36}

In June of 1968, Johnson signed the Omnibus Crime Act.
"I don't want to do it," he said, "but I have no choice."
He thought the Republicans would make a bad time for the
Democrats in November if he didn't. He also cancelled plans
for domestic proposals because the Republicans would defeat
anything radical with an election coming up, and because,
"it will hurt its chances of ever being passed if it's connected
to me."\textsuperscript{37}

After the election, Johnson would consult with President-
elect Nixon on foreign policy, but on the domestic side, he
tried to keep the Great Society going, even after Nixon had
said he would carefully review many of its programs. During
this time, Johnson expanded the Concentrated Employment
Program in the Labor and Defense Departments, gave more
grants in the Model Cities Program and increased the number
of desegregation investigations in the North and the South.\textsuperscript{38}

Even though Johnson was politically finished, he remained
an active President. He still had strong control over foreign
policy and was still extending his domestic policy. He also
seems to remain on the negative side through his retirement.
His complaining that the Republicans were out to get
his programs and the fact that he believed he had his hands tied on the crime bill seems to indicate that he still didn't enjoy or get satisfaction out of the effort he put forth. The rigid policy line showed with his continued war in Vietnam and the spending on the Great Society (the guns and butter policy). For all intents and purposes, Johnson was still the President of the United States and still pretty effective at getting what he wanted. He remained an active-negative President through his entire term.

RICHARD M. NIXON

Like Lyndon Johnson before him, Richard Nixon was an active-negative President. He was inexhaustible, especially while campaigning. He worked until very late at night frequently. Nixon "presented himself as a man engaged in action he finds emotionally punishing." Many times he found himself about to quit politics—after the 1960 Presidential election and again in 1962 after his defeat for the California governorship.39 Happiness in his political experience was rare. Then supportive mail came in after the Nixon fund crisis and when he won the Senate are two examples, and about the only ones.40

Nixon was a whirlwind of energy. During his first term he travelled to Pakistan, West Africa, Iran, Russia, Poland, USSR, China and Vietnam. He also travelled to France, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia.41 He would work for hours on a single speech. Frequently, he would work on even the smallest details of a
program instead of leaving it to a Cabinet member or staff member. In fact, soon after Nixon took office, he started taking action on domestic policies on his own—without or against the advice of his closest advisors. He also started escalating the war in South Vietnam and Cambodia without much consultation with others.

Like Johnson, Nixon controlled publicity very tightly. This was especially true of the war in Southeast Asia and Watergate.

Watergate was Nixon's undoing. This is where his rigid policy agenda became clear. It was obvious to those around Nixon that the way he was handling the Watergate crisis was wrong. However, Nixon went about it his own way, and it cost him the Presidency.

During his Presidency, Nixon accomplished such things as the first strategic arms limitation (SALT I), and the opening of relations with Communist China, he ended the Vietnam War (or at least pulled U.S. troops out), and brought the POWs home. He established a detente with the Soviet Union and under his New Federalism program, started revenue sharing with the states. He sponsored the arts and humanities, which one Nixon biographer called his "most unexpected contribution." He also sped the pace of desegregation. One biographer says this of his biggest achievement, "Nixon consciously presided over the end of the 'postwar world' and craftily helped shape to the specification of his vision—a somewhat safer peacetime world."
Nixon’s retirement term is hard to define as to precisely when it started. Nixon’s retirement didn’t come because of election defeat, as did Ford’s, the Twenty-Second Amendment to Eisenhower’s, or a decision to retire from politics, as did Johnson’s. Nixon’s "retirement", to use a euphemism, came about because of his downfall, a continuous one since at least June of 1973 when John Dean testified before the Watergate committee and accused the President. It started slow at first, but as more and more evidence was brought out, his downfall quickened.

There is little doubt as to Nixon’s character during this time. It remained active-negative. Nixon worked exhaustively day and night, more and more toward the end of his term he awoke and worked at night. "As long as I am physically able, I am going to continue to work sixteen to eighteen hours a day."

Because of his position at home, he could do nothing domestically or economically. In fact, in 1973, out of a total of 280 programs Nixon sent to Congress, only one-third were enacted into law. So Nixon’s energies were divided up into trying to save himself politically (by keeping the tapes from the Special Prosecutor for instance), listening to the tapes for hours on end, and foreign affairs. In his last few months, Nixon travelled to the Middle East and the USSR.

He was also out of touch with reality during the last few weeks. He drank heavily and was often enraged. He was
also reported to have talked with the pictures of former Presidents. This is not the way a man behaves if he is getting emotional satisfaction out of politics. What Nixon feared most about Watergate was his loss of power. This is also typical of active-negative behavior.

In short, Nixon's retirement term, considered from about June of 1973 was very atypical. He was paralyzed at home, so he went abroad to get away from the problem. All the while, Nixon retained an active-negative President.

GERALD FORD

Gerald Ford took over the Presidency upon Nixon's resignation in August of 1974 and remained President until 1976. Farber put him into the active-positive category.

Active-positives put forth a lot of effort and enjoy it. They want to achieve results instead of obtaining power as the active-negatives do.[51]

Ford was this kind of President. "Ford had been hyper-active all his political life." he had "been a person who's helped to arrange compromises and co-ordinate things," and one who "may not much so easily." Farber saw Ford as open, flexible, growing in office, ready to consider alternatives to his plans. These are the characteristics of an active-positive President.[52]

Ford was ready to consider alternatives to his plans. He tried innovative programs such as the WIN program, and when that failed, tried something else. He held economic
summits, asked Congress for tax cuts and budget cuts, and to reduce federal employment all to help with the economy.

When the Ayatollah was seized, at first Ford voted for heavy air strikes, but on advice by David Keenerly, the official photographer, he voted for less drastic measures.53

In other foreign policy measures, he traveled to South Korea, USSR, China, and Spain. He also met with leaders of Poland, Austria, Jordan, Italy, Israel, Egypt, and France—all in two years and five months.

He met with Brezhnev several times in the USSR, Helsinki, and the U.S. to work out a SALT II agreement. When he found this could not be accomplished, he made an agreement with the Soviets in Helsinki concerning economic and cultural cooperation.

Ford was not afraid to make unpopular decisions while in office. His pardon of Richard Nixon and his decision to refuse aid to New York City were both very unpopular. Both of these could have cost him the election in 1976, but he made them because he felt they were right.

Ford enjoyed being President. When people would ask "'Aren't the burdens so heavy that you can't get any sleep?'" he would reply, "'Absolutely not.' I never felt better physically. I never had a clearer mind. I never enjoyed an experience more. The truth is that I couldn't wait to start the day."54
Ford had problems with Congress throughout his term. Part of this grew out of Watergate and Vietnam. Also Congress had become a more democratic organization with power more dispersed. Ford was also more conservative than Congress and of a different party than the majority in both houses. Because of these, Ford only had about 30% of his programs enacted into law by Congress.

Ford's retirement term came in November of 1976 when he was defeated by Jimmy Carter. Much of the time Ford spent away from Washington, in Palm Springs, Camp David, or Vail, working on his budget and State of the Union message.

However, Ford decided he wanted a few more things done before he left the White House. He decided he wanted to make Puerto Rico a state, deregulate the price of natural gas, considered an increase in federal officials' salaries, and appointed four new ambassadors. When asked why he didn't leave these things to Carter, he replied, "Because I'm President until January 20." Time magazine said that Ford's decision on Puerto Rico, "surely reflected the familiar predicament of a lame duck Chief Executive whose desire to deepen his mark in history is matched only by his loss of real power."

I think this is an accurate statement. Ford seems to have recognized that if he was going to really make a mark in history, he would have to do something right then. His retirement status, however, caused him loss of power, so he reached out for something to do to prove that he was "still the President until January 20."
This, I think, demonstrates that Ford remained an active-positive President through his retirement term. Active-positives are concerned with achievements. These proposals by Ford during this time seem to indicate that he wanted to accomplish more before he left Washington. Here his retirement performance seemed to be shaped by his character.

JAMES EARL CARTER

Jimmy Carter became president in 1976. This was just before Barber had his new edition of his book *Presidential Character* published. So, Barber didn't have the advantage of hindsight in putting Carter into a character. So, using what information was available, he said that Carter, like Ford, would be an active-positive President. Carter, he said, has always been energetic. He predicted that Carter would find life at the White House fun.59

Indeed, Carter did seem to be an active-positive President. He displayed the same openness and ability to compromise that Ford did. He was also not afraid to try something different if one of his programs didn't work (e.g., his several economic packages while in office).

Carter wasn't afraid to try new programs, such as implementing Zero Based Budgeting into the budgetary process and his creation of the Energy and Education Departments.

Carter's work on the Panama Canal, Middle East, and Salt II treaties shows he can and is willing to, compromise.
Carter worked tirelessly meeting with Begin and Sadat in a shuttle-type diplomacy to work out a deal. When the two sides were far apart, Carter got them to compromise, and he finally succeeded in making an agreement. 69

During his term, Carter also pardoned the Vietnam draft evaders, created a tax rebate program, promised a gradual withdrawal of American troops from South Korea, offered legislation for a Youth Conservation Corps, made an arms sale agreement with Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Israel, and normalized relations with Communist China.

When the hostages were taken in Iran in 1979, Carter worked tirelessly, trying to find a solution to the crisis. When talks seemed to be going nowhere, he decided on a rescue mission, which failed. He had earlier taken action to freeze Iranian assets in the U.S., kicked out Iranian diplomats, halted oil imports from Iran and appealed to the U.N. and World Court for action.

During this time, the USSR invaded Afghanistan. Carter called back the U.S. Ambassador to Russia on January 3, 1980. The next day he announced an embargo of economic and cultural exchanges with Russia. He finally announced the boycott of the Moscow Olympics. "Within the month," Betty Glad writes, "Carter had inflated a serious problem into the most serious threat to peace since World War II" 61.

Carter still hadn't worked out a solution to the Iranian crisis when he was defeated in 1980 and went into his retirement.
period. For this reason, Carter's retirement period is different from other President's. Usually, during a President's retirement term, "the international environment will recede in its demands for American involvement..."62 Not so with Carter. Much of Carter's retirement term was spent in trying to win the release of the hostages. Especially in the last few days, when hopes were rising, Carter worked tirelessly on the issue. This is not the place to recount the happenings of the hostage drama, but finally, after much negotiation, the hostages were released on Inaugural Day, 1981.

Apart from the hostage crisis, however, Carter seemed less active than before. Frequently, during conversations with staff and Cabinet members, Carter, when talking of an issue, would say, "Well, that'll be a problem for the next administration."63

He also seemed more negative. He was angry at Washington's greeting of Reagan and at newspaper and magazine articles that said Reagan would bring culture to the White House that hadn't been there in four years. He seemed bitter that he had lost the election.64 He almost seemed to change from active-positive to passive-negative, like Coolidge and Eisenhower.

Part of this could be due to frustration over the hostage issue. He wanted very much to get the hostages out and may have felt that he could score no time on other matters. Likewise, his bitterness could have been due to the feeling
that he might not see the hostages released during his Presidency. He felt personally responsible for their lives, and wanted to be the one to set them out safely. Part of this character change could also be a realization that little could be done during his retirement term, so he would leave it all to Reagan. I think all of these seem likely.

CONCLUSIONS

What, then, can be said about Presidential retirement performance? For the most part, each of the President's performances seemed to have been a product of their characters. Lyndon Johnson is the only one who seems to have ignored the constraints on him, and had much success. The others, for one reason or another, tried to do little, or if they did try, found they couldn't do much.

The passive-negatives, Coolidge and Eisenhower, didn't try to do much in their retirement terms. This arose, I think, out of their character of being above politics and of their conservative philosophy.

The passive-positive, Taft, like Coolidge and Eisenhower, didn't try to do much, and as with the passive-negatives, this arose out of his passive character and conservativism. They all believed government should be restrained, and so didn't venture forth with new programs.

Of the active-negatives, Carter had better success than Ford. Ford proposed some grandiose programs to Congress during his retirement term, and, faced with a Democratic
Congress, found he could do nothing. Natural gas was not
deregulated and Puerto Rico is still not a state. His per-
formance was because of his character.

Carter's position of being President during the hostage
dilemma afforded him a better chance to get things done,
and, indeed, he did get the hostages out. Domestically,
though, Carter tried to do little, leaving the issue, like
the passives did, to the next administration.

ixon, an active-negative, found himself paralyzed
at home because of Watergate, so he took several trips abroad.
Still, he accomplished little in his long, agonizing "re-
tirement" term. With the hostile Congress, it would have been
fruitless if he had ever tried. Still, he remained an active-
negative. He worked constantly the last few months listening
to his tapes, and travelling. He also received no emotional
satisfaction out of his effort. This characteristic shaped
his performance during his last year in office.

Johnson, also an active-negative, did seem to have
some success. Even though the press, public and Congress
were hostile to him, and even though he was finished pol-
itically, he managed to show he was still the President.

This, I believe, arises out of his active-negative
character. Active-negatives are never seekers. Johnson sought
for and amassed an enormous amount of it in his political
life, and still was in control of at least some of it during
his retirement term. If this is the case, then ifixon had
survived Watergate, or, better yet, had it not happened at
all, he might have gone on to a relatively successful re-
tirement term.
What can be done to help the retiring President's success? The constraints cannot be totally eliminated unless we make a person President for life. His term is always going to end sometime, so every President, except those who die in office, are going to have a retirement term. It is unrealistic to have the President-elect take office immediately upon his victory, things need to be organized and staffs need to be picked.

The Twentieth Amendment to the Constitution, ratified in 1933, shortened a President's lame duck term. This, I think, helped tremendously. The retiring President now has only two and one-half months in office instead of before when he had four. The term could still be shortened, to say the beginning of January. This would further limit the time the constraints would be on the President.

Finally, the Twenty-second Amendment should be abolished. This way, a President could decide to run for a third term and would not be under the constraints he is in his second term at the present time. He would be able to choose a little better, when his retirement period would begin, unless he is defeated in the election.

Harry Truman once made an insightful comment on the Twenty-second Amendment. He said the amendment's effect was to take a man and put him in the "hardest job in the world, and send him out to fight our battles in a life-and-death struggle— and you have sent him out to fight with one hand
tied behind his back, because everyone knows he cannot run for reelection." If people don't like a President, it doesn't require a Constitutional Amendment to get rid of him.65
FOOTNOTES

1 Bunce, Valerie. "Policy Cycles and the American Presidency." Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Convention, Cincinnati, Ohio, April 15-18, 1981, p. 35.


3 Ibid., p. 13.


5 Ibid.


8 Barber, p. 182.

9 Pringle, p. 603.

10 Barber, p. 147.

11 Ibid., p. 145.

12 Ibid., p. 147.

13 Ibid., p. 147.

14 Ibid., p. 145.


16 Barber, p. 157.

17 Ibid., p. 157.
FOOTNOTE (cont.)

18 Ibid., p. 159.


20 Ibid., p. 32.

21 Ibid., p. 85-86.

22 Ibid., p. 33.


25 Barber, p. 76.

26 Ibid., p. 12, 347.


28 Barber, p. 93.

29 Kearns, p. 215.

30 Ibid., p. 173.

31 Ibid., p. 189.

32 Ibid., p. 263.

33 Ibid., p. 310.


FOOTNOTES (cont.)

36 Kearns, n.318.

37 Ibid., n.350.


39 Barber, p.348.

40 Ibid., p.350.

41 Watkins, Ollie, The White House Years. (Playboy Press, 1977),

42 Barber, p.423.

43 Ibid., p.434.

44 Ibid., p.425.


46 Ibid., p.691.

47 Barber, p.461.

48 Cronin, p.171.


50 Ibid., p.438.

51 Barber, p.13.

52 Ibid., p.486-7.

P. OTNOTES (cont.)

54 Ibid., p. 297.

55 Cronin, p. 212.

56 Ibid., p. 171.


58 Ibid., p. 21.

59 Barber, p. 535.


61 Ibid., p. 460-462.

62 Bunce, p. 35.


64 Ibid., p. 29.

65 Cronin, p. 48.
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