

# Style

## THE INAUGURATION

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song of the same name). The lyrics were "Try to remember that date in

### Jest for Fun, Taking Jabs At George

The Lighter Side Of the Bush Brigade

By Carla Hall  
Illustration by Matt Winter

Some cartoonists lament that George Bush leaves little to be caricatured, but comedians seem to have no problem. "Welcome to my act," Rich Little, impressionist and Bush supporter, wrote to Bush after he won the election.

"He's not the Gipper, he's the Gipper," Washington satirist Mark Russell—who will not reveal whom he supported—has proclaimed about his newest presidential target of comedy. Humor abounds this week—planned humor, that is, as opposed to the spontaneous variety that will likely erupt, too. Mark Russell opens a new show at Ford's Theatre tonight for five shows through Saturday. Rich Little was scheduled to appear at the American Bicentennial Inaugural Ball on Thursday, but canceled about two weeks ago. According to Bob Roberts, of the Council for Inter-American Security, which is sponsoring the event, Little dropped out after President Reagan asked him to be part of a delegation welcoming him back to California at the end of the week.

There's no intimacy between us and Rich," Roberts said. "It's fine."

In keeping with the theme of the 500th anniversary of Columbus' discovery of America, the council will turn a ballroom at the Crystal Gateway Marriott into Columbus' landing scene and convert the stage into a design of the Santa Maria.

Humor is always a delicate art form, but no doubt someone will find something funny in such events as Friday's Liberals' Inaugural, thrown



GNP's Helen Van Hook, left, as Marilyn Quayle, John Hargrove as Dan Quayle, John Simmons as George Bush and Marianne Curran as Barbara Bush.

by Americans for Democratic Action ("When Card-Carrying Liberals Raise L") at 1201 New York Ave. NW. They're offering "Beer, Wine, and Great Munchies" as well as "political humor." For several prices: A \$30 ticket at the door makes you a "Last-Minute Liberal"; for \$1,000 you get 10 tickets and status as a "Bleeding Heart Liberal"; and for \$5,000 you're christened a Liberal Hero and you get 20 tickets.

Then the political comedy troupe, Gross National Product, kicks off the Bush administration with its new weekly show, "BushCapades: An Administration on Thin Ice," which opens Saturday night at the Bayou. "We're offering a thousand points of light in a kinder, Gentile nation," said John Simmons, the company's founder-director and resident George Bush imitator.

Gross National Product's revue includes an inaugural swearing in, featuring Bush doing the Pledge of Allegiance ("... and to the Republicans for which it stands..."). Some of the sketches include "Mr. Sununu Goes to Washington," "Bush Hunting With Quayle" and "Peace Breaks Out."

Simmons is the voice and face of Bush in the show. "He's not the great communicator by any means. He's stiff. His voice quality changes a lot. You can see his nerves, whereas Rea-

gan was almost the opposite. He was so smooth."

GNP meanwhile continues to bus customers about for its "Scandal Tours": the Watergate, the Tidal Basin, the Capitol (they spend a long time there), Gary Hart's one-time Capitol Hill town house. "We get people off the bus and take them through the alley," Simmons said.

In the new show, the group is kinder and gentler to Barbara Bush. "We don't really rip her up too much," Simmons said of the show. "We try to let other people go at her."

Marilyn Quayle is another matter. And of course her husband Dan: "We have him saying things like, 'I've experienced the war just as much as anyone who reads Time magazine... I promise to serve you just as I did in the National Guard—on weekends.'"

Even George Bush is laughing.

The Capitol steps, the Hill-spawned comedy singing group, has performed a half-dozen times at parties hosted by Bush, twice just last month. At Bush's Pearl Harbor Day party at the vice presidential mansion—held Dec. 6 because Bush was meeting with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in New York on the 7th, the real anniversary—the president-elect joined the group in a song called "Try to Remember" (to the tune of the popular

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and Secret Service people," added the outfit's Edward Lozzi. (Of course they will.)

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THE NATION'S NEWSPAPER

# USA TODAY

## CAPITAL LINE

USA TODAY'S BRIEFING ON WASHINGTON

### PEOPLE WATCH



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**BRISK BUSINESS:** John Simmons and Marianne Curran impersonate George and Barbara Bush.

► A new fun couple has hit Washington's party circuit this season: George and Barbara Bush—or, more precisely, impersonator-actors John Simmons and Marianne Curran, who do a brisk business hiring out for parties and business meetings. Best customers: Republicans. "For them, we're kinder and gentler," says Simmons, 33. He says he's happy Bush won: He offers more material.