

# Weekend

## On Stage

THEATER • DANCE

### Impolitic as Usual



**Gross National Product**  
(Regularly Saturdays at the Bayou)

**This Saturday at Lisner Auditorium**  
Tickets: 202/783-7212

Between the earthquake out West and the deep freeze back East, the Gross National Product troupe picked a fine time recently to film L.A. and D.C. "field segments" for its third TV special for PBS. Fortunately, inclement weather and/or seismic catastrophes are not predicted for the taping of the audience portion of the show, which takes the satirists from their weekly slot at the Bayou to Lisner Auditorium Saturday.

"It's a television interpretation of our stage act," explains ring leader John Simmons (as Janet Reao, above left, with Bob Garman, Bob Heck and Marianne Curan filling in for George Stephanopoulos, Bill Clinton and Hillary Rodham Clinton). "At the Bayou, it's like a 'Second City' format, with improvisation and sketches. The show at Lisner will have the flow of a live show, and there will be some improv, but those segments won't be telecast."

Both the Lisner audience and those watching the TV show (Maryland public television stations will air it Wednesday) will see a barrage of Washington-inspired parodies, according to Simmons. "We're doing a takeoff of 'The Capital Gang' called 'Capital Crossfire,' where their slogan is 'If you can't say anything nice about anyone, don't say anything at all'—and they can't."

The GNP cast will also perform "Zhirinovsky, the Musical," with songs like "Don't Cry for Me, Boris Yeltsin"; "Night of the Living Presidents," a sketch starring "Dr. David Gergenstein" ("He turns Clinton into the perfect president—a Republican," Simmons quips); and an extended satire of Disney's plans for Virginia (which led to the troupe's ill-timed trip to Southern California).

"We're also going to take a swipe at public broadcasting itself with Suzy Grovel, pledge director at WEAK, saying you've got 48 hours to cough up your pledge or they're pulling the plug on Barney," Simmons adds. "Whatever's in the media is where the jokes come from—today's headlines, tomorrow's punchlines. The only thing we're not making fun of is the Bobbitt case—thank God."

— Jeanne Cooper