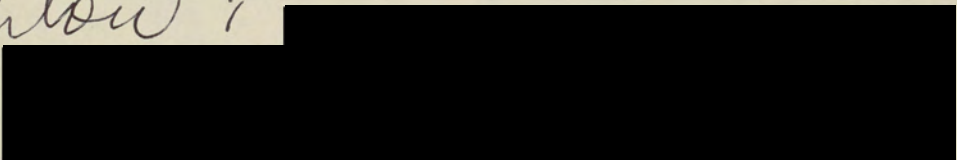


Brain is a paper like
its sad a paper like
the Post & Times didn't
carry the price & the
full details of the Oval office -
So here's a clipping. Is the
cost higher than Reagan, Bush,
& Nixon? By 20 it look
very nice -

Do you ever say any-
thing positive about
Mr Clinton?





AP photo

The newly renovated Oval Office of the White House is seen Friday. The new look for the office, completed by an Arkansas designer under the direction of President Clinton.,

Oval Office gets new look: bold colors, stripes

■ Renovations paid for by private contributions.

By NANCY BENAC
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Goodbye, muted blues and creamy couches. The president who took office promising change started right in the Oval Office, adding bold new colors, striking stripes and artwork rich in symbolism.

The new look for the Oval Office — completed by an Arkansas designer under the direction of President Clinton — was formally unveiled Friday.

The president said he'd had "a little input" in the project and praised the results. "I like it a lot," he said.

"It's alive and vibrant," said White House curator Rex Scouten, who's been watching presidents redo their digs since the Truman administration.

"Most presidents come in proposing change, and want their own offices to reflect what they feel," he said. "They want to project their own image."

The renovations started on Inauguration Day with new drapes and have been steadily progressing ever since.

Lisa Caputo, a spokeswoman for Hillary Rodham Clinton, said the renovations were worked out between the president and Little Rock designer Kaki Hockersmith with little input from Mrs. Clinton.

The new look is uniquely Clinton, from the family photos on the table behind his desk to his own collection of busts, including Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin D. Roosevelt and John F. Kennedy.

The Kennedy legacy looms large in the room.

Clinton from the start chose to bring back the "Resolute" desk last used in the Oval Office by Kennedy, and there are two books by Robert Kennedy among those stacked near his desk.

Clinton also set out to send a message with the new decor.

"As part of the restoration, President Clinton felt strongly that the Oval Office should reflect the cultural strength and diversity of our nation," the White House said in a statement.

The office displays the sculpture, *Appeal to the Great Spirit*, by Cyrus Edwin Dallin, "that

The right touches

The finishing touches, completed while Clinton was away on vacation last week, are the most striking:

■ The soft blue rug was traded for a bright, royal blue one. Woven by top New York design firm Scalamanre, the rug's center medallion features a full-color presidential seal with a gilt double-rope band. In all, the rug has 13 colors, symbolizing the 13 colonies.

■ The couches also have firmer padding, at Clinton's request.

■ The twin sofas where Clinton relaxes with visiting heads of state and other VIPs have gone from cream-colored damask to a bright red-and-cream striped silk, topped with red pillows decorated with gilt-leaf medallions.

■ The seats of the cane-backed armchairs around the room were recovered in a custom blue, red and gold silk Scalamanre fabric called, fittingly enough, "Little Rock diamond."

■ The gold damask draperies and valances installed in January now are trimmed with ornamental blue and red tape banding.

celebrates the stoicism and dignity of Native Americans," the White House said.

The president's adjoining private conference room includes the painting, *Waiting for the Hour*, by William Tolman Carlton, depicting the joy of slaves at the imminent signing of the Emancipation Proclamation.

Both are from the permanent White House collection.

The White House did not reveal the cost of the renovations, part of a broader refurbishing project involving various rooms within the executive mansion. Overall, the work is expected to cost \$400,000, paid for by private contributions to the White House Historical Association.

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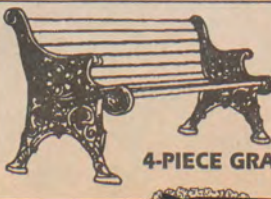


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