

'My friends, we did it. We weren't just marking time, we made a difference. ... All in all, not bad. Not bad at all.'

REAGAN

1911-2004



1980: Ronald Reagan poses in Los Angeles during his presidential campaign.

GEORGE ROSE — SPECIAL TO THE MERCURY NEWS

The Californian

His adopted home shaped him, and in turn, he redefined it.

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The legacy

He showed an unwavering zeal for obliterating communism.

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The leader

Editorial: He had strong convictions and a talent for articulating his goals.

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RONALD WILSON REAGAN | 1911-2004

"You had the Sun King living in the White House. He radiated that all is well, which is what the country desperately wanted." HAYNES JOHNSON, REAGAN BIOGRAPHER

THE MYSTIQUE

His ability to communicate, finely polished yet instinctive, made him an icon for America

CAREFULLY SCRIPTED SPEECHES INCLUDED HUMOR, INSPIRATION, EXQUISITE TIMING

By Julia Prodis Sulek
Mercury News

Seconds before his weekly Saturday morning radio address to the nation from the Oval Office, President Reagan would gather his three-minute speech — always scripted to three full pages with four lines on a fourth page — glance at his watch, then tap his foot like a metronome.

"Good morning, fellow Americans," he would begin on cue.

Reagan had perfect timing. "It was like watching Pavarotti from backstage," said former Reagan speechwriter Peter Robinson, now a fellow at Stanford's Hoover Institution. "He was richly gifted, but he worked very hard at it."

Reagan was anchored in Americana, his message and mystique deeply embedded in the traditional notion of what America means — rugged individualism, self-made men, heroes — the kind of men actors John Wayne and Humphrey Bogart personified on the big screen.

Many Americans believed that Reagan was one of them, too.

Reagan had an aura that transcended his politics and personal shortcomings. Even those who disagreed with him couldn't help but be charmed.

He had a quick Irish wit and dogged Midwestern optimism.

He appeared to have all the answers — simple, comprehensible ones — to the nation's most vexing problems. And when he wrapped them with lofty patriotic rhetoric, as he often did, he held many Americans spellbound.

With a jaunty cock of his head and a twinkle in his eye, he conveyed a vision of what it meant to be an American.

Some say Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger shares Reagan's ability to raise mystique to the level of message, and the movie-star-to-governor's-mansion parallel is hard to ignore. But there was only one Reagan — a league of one.

Reagan at 69 was the oldest president to take office, but his robust cowboy ways assured Americans he was vigorous and manly.

As Reagan entered the 1980 presidential race, the country was in the midst of its biggest economic crisis since the Great Depression. Interest rates were at 21 percent, inflation hit 12 percent and gas prices were soaring. The Cold War raged and the Soviet Union's nuclear arsenal remained a source of fear.

To a nation craving reassurance, Reagan delivered.

"They say the United States has had its day in the sun, that our nation has passed its zenith," Reagan said during the campaign. "They expect you to



President Reagan shared a light moment with Soviet Leader Mikhail Gorbachev in Red Square in this undated picture. Reagan was known for his intuitive way of handling personal contacts.

tell your children . . . that the future will be one of sacrifice and few opportunities. My fellow Americans, I utterly reject that view. Nothing is impossible."

Many Americans ate it up. "You had the Sun King living in the White House," said Re-

gan biographer and former Washington Post reporter Haynes Johnson. "He radiated that all is well, which is what the country desperately wanted."

He reinforced that message just nine weeks after he was sworn in, when he survived an

assassination attempt. Reagan came through with such grace, style and wit that he emerged more popular than ever.

To his wife, he quipped, "Honey, I forgot to duck."

To his doctors, "I hope you're all Republicans."

Four months later, he broke up the strike of 11,600 air traffic controllers. He fired them all — an uncompromising action that earned him respect among international leaders and Americans longing for a decisive president.

"Had the assassination attempt and controllers' strike come late in his term, he would never have been able to forge the commanding national presence that gave his presidency such power and force, for better or worse," Johnson wrote.

Reagan quickly embarked on his conservative agenda. With gestures and an authoritative tone he learned during his Hollywood years, which included a stint as spokesman for General Electric Co., he delivered his message across the airwaves.

He kept it simple. Communism is bad. A strong defense is good. Taxes are bad. Private enterprise is good.

He probably used the word "freedom" more than any other president — until maybe the current occupant of the White House.

His speechwriters followed Reagan's simple formula: Never speak more than half an hour — 20 minutes is better; no more than five minutes

should be devoted to heavy substance; spotlight a do-gooder in the audience who can inspire others; add a little humor; and end with an uplifting story. "A speech is not a lecture," Reagan would tell his writers.

"He was a great communicator. It wasn't just because he was handsome, had a great voice and had acting ability," said Dana Rohrabacher, another former Reagan speechwriter and now a congressman from Huntington Beach. "He understood the dynamics of verbal communication."

It's a talent current politicians covet. During a campaign swing in 1999 through California, then-GOP presidential candidate George W. Bush spent three days on the road with the Hoover Institution's Robinson, grilling him about Reagan's magical speaking style.

"I never heard George W. say, 'I'd like to give a speech the way Dad did,'" Robinson said.

Reagan was often criticized for being a figurehead lacking substance, an uncomplicated actor who rose to power on the strength of his aides.

"Too often, Reagan was a performer and presidential leadership an empty shell," wrote Lou Cannon, a Reagan biographer and Washington Post reporter who had covered Reagan since his first campaign for governor of California.

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On Election Day of 1980, Reagan used his familiar thumbs-up sign to greet supporters. He had just defeated incumbent President Jimmy Carter.

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RONALD WILSON REAGAN | 1911-2004

"He was a great communicator, not simply because of his personality or this TelePrompTer, but mostly because he has something to communicate." **SEN. EDWARD KENNEDY, D-MASS., IN 1989 SPEECH**



October 13, 1987 At the Berlin Wall

President Reagan addresses a cheering crowd at the symbol of a divided Berlin. A former aide says Reagan's staff saw him "as a sort of supreme anchorman whose public persona was the most important element of his presidency."



ASSOCIATED PRESS ARCHIVES

The president and Nancy Reagan wave to well-wishers from his room at Navy Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., in 1985.

Deeply held beliefs and enormous charm made him easy to disagree with but hard to dislike

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Indeed, former Reagan White House Chief of Staff Donald T. Regan has written that trusted aides scripted each presidential action as a brief spot on the evening news. They considered the president, "not as the powerful and utterly original leader that he was, but as a sort of supreme anchorman whose public persona was the most important element of his presidency."

"That public persona served Reagan well. He wasn't a war hero, although he did lead cavalry charges in the movies. But Reagan captured the affection of servicemen more than true military heroes Bob Dole and the first President Bush ever did.

"The guy who gets the most salutes and inspired the devotion was Reagan," said Dinesh D'Souza, a resident scholar at the conservative American Enterprise Institute and author of "Ronald Reagan: How an Ordinary Man Became an Extraordinary Leader."

"Reagan almost single-handedly rebuilt the morale of the armed forces," D'Souza said.

Reagan's understanding of human nature was intuitive. Once in a receiving line at a concert in Constitution Hall, Reagan stood alongside his vice president, George Bush.

When Willie Nelson whispered into fellow entertainer Ray Charles' ear that he was about to meet the vice president and president, the blind musician began to sway back and forth enthusiastically. Bush reached to give Charles an awkward handshake.

"Reagan realized the inadequacy of the gesture and pulled Charles into him and gave him a hug," said Robinson.

In a formal receiving line of guests and dignitaries, Reagan would give more than a simple handshake. With his free hand, he would clutch the person's elbow as well, giving an intimate squeeze — as well as a slight nudge to keep the line moving.

"If you think of Ronald Reagan, you think of a smiling, friendly, attractive, honest, decent all-American guy. He made you feel good," biographer Johnson said. "Whether there was something great in that picture, or whether it hid other faults, that's how history will judge him."



SHOTS RING OUT: President Reagan winces and raises his arm as he is shot after leaving the Washington Hilton, where he made a speech to a labor group.



THE REACTION: A Secret Service agent begins to push Reagan into his limousine after the president was shot by John Hinckley Jr. Others look for the gunman.



DESPERATE PUSH FOR SAFETY: Agents hurry to get the president out of harm's way and to medical attention as others subdue the attacker.

March 30, 1981 The president is shot

THE SHOOTING

The assassination attempt occurred outside the Washington Hilton at 2:25 p.m. on March 30, 1981, as Reagan left a meeting. Gunman John Hinckley Jr. was quickly subdued, but not before firing six bullets from a .22-caliber handgun. Reagan's press secretary, James S. Brady, also was seriously wounded.

THE SURGERY

A bullet entered Reagan's chest under his left arm, and he underwent surgery at George Washington University Hospital to extract it. The bullet lodged close to his heart, but did not pierce it. That night in the recovery room, he communicated by writing one-liner jokes.

COMING HOME

Reagan returned to the White House 12 days after the shooting and surgery. He remained mostly in the living quarters, away from the working offices in the West Wing, but received regular briefings from his staff on national and international developments.

BACK TO WORK

On April 28, four weeks after the assassination attempt, Reagan addressed a joint session of Congress. He had appeared on a radio talk show first, but the congressional appearance was the first public view of him back at work.



THE AFTERMATH: Secret Service agents attend to wounded police officer Thomas Delahanty, left, and press secretary James Brady, center, while others subdue Hinckley, at right.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY RON EDMONDS — ASSOCIATED PRESS ARCHIVES

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RONALD WILSON REAGAN | 1911-2004

"He had a lot of people who associated with him, worked with him and talked to him. But he had only one friend, and that was Nancy." **MARTIN ANDERSON, REAGAN'S DOMESTIC-POLICY ADVISER**

THE FIRST LADY

He was genial, she was tough: Nancy turned the first lady stereotype on its head



ASSOCIATED PRESS ARCHIVES

The Reagans' first presidential kiss came Jan. 20, 1981, at the Capitol after Reagan was sworn in.

IN NANCY'S WORDS

"A woman is like a tea bag — you can't tell how strong she is until you put her in hot water."

"Just say no to drugs!"

"I do not believe in abortion at will. I do not believe that if a woman just wants to have an abortion she should. . . . I do believe if you have an abortion, you are committing murder."

OBSERVERS SAY SHE WAS FIERCELY PROTECTIVE, AN INFLUENTIAL ADVISER AND HER HUSBAND'S NO. 1 CHEERLEADER

By Tracy Seipel and Linda Goldston
Mercury News

She was by his side to the end, fighting to protect him on his way to the White House, fighting to shield him as Alzheimer's disease took its toll.

Her "Ronnie" was former first lady Nancy Reagan's ticket to the world — and if he had the bulk of the charm and charisma, she had the focus and ferocity to get them there.

She won fans and earned enemies along the way.

"Honey, I'll tell you what I think," said Harriet Deutsch, a good friend whose husband helped Ronald Reagan get his start in politics. "We've known them 50 years, and all I can tell you is that she has, from the start, been a loving, caring, supportive wife in every phase of his life and his career. What more can I say?"

His closest friend

History and even a recent controversial movie recorded — and sometimes distorted — much of the public lives of Nancy and Ronald Reagan. He called her "Mommy"; she was his closest friend and confidant.

Nancy Reagan, 82, spent much of the past 10 years caring for her husband of 52 years as the disease progressed. It was a time, a pain, she hoped to spare others.

"I am determined to do whatever I can," she told a star-studded crowd at a Beverly Hills fundraiser in her honor May 8. The event raised \$2 million for a campaign she had lobbied for in private for years: the use of stem-cell research in search of a cure for Alzheimer's and other debilitating diseases.

President Bush has opposed such research, but Alzheimer's, she said, had taken the former president "to a distant place where I can no longer reach him."

Without her, Reagan might never have become president.

"He had a lot of people who associated with him, worked with him,

and talked to him," said Martin Anderson, who served as Reagan's domestic policy adviser and is now a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution. "But he had only one friend, and that was Nancy."

Comedians' target

Throughout their marriage, Nancy Reagan was portrayed as the fiercely protective and paranoid wife, embattled mother and bitter stepmother. She appeared to identify only with the rich and famous. To many, she seemed imperious and stingy with everyone but herself. Her quest for perfection in all things — her X-ray figure, her Adolfo suits and Galanos gowns, her White House renovations — made her an easy target.

The brouhaha that erupted in the early 1980s when she announced she was "borrowing" designer outfits that she would return — further galled the public.

And her anti-drug campaign, with its slogan "Just Say No," became an easy mark for satire.

"Someone questioned her about foreign policy and whether or not she favored Red China," Johnny Carson once quipped. "She said she did, but not with yellow tablecloths."

The comedian derided her as "the Evita of Bel-Air" and "Nancita." America laughed.

But for all the Nancy-bashing, without her, most observers agree, Ronald Reagan was headed toward life as a Hollywood has-been, not as the world leader who helped tear down the wall of communism.

"She has more ambition than he does," Ron Reagan, the couple's only son, said during a segment of "60 Minutes" in the fall of 1999. "Left to his own devices he might have, you know, ended up hosting 'Unsolved Mysteries' on TV or something."

The younger Reagan said his mother saw in his father "the stuff that could be president . . . and kept

pushing and kept pushing and kept pushing."

And protecting him — notably from staff members she didn't think were serving her husband well, said Lou Cannon, a longtime Reagan watcher, biographer and reporter who chronicled the couple from their rise to power in California.

She was keenly aware of her husband's charismatic connection with the masses, said Ken Khachigian, a former Reagan speechwriter and California Republican operative.

During the 1980 presidential campaign motorcade in Illinois, Khachigian was asked to join the Reagans in their limousine to discuss a foreign policy speech he had written for the candidate.

"I got onto the jump seat, knee-to-knee with Mrs. Reagan and the governor, and for the next 30 minutes I was furiously taking notes," Khachigian recalled. "She was making suggestions — not what to say in terms of words or policy, but about presentation. 'Ronnie needs to be emotional,' she told me. 'People react to him when he's emotional.'"

She knew Reagan's talent for evoking feelings in his listeners.

"I must have had lunch three, four or five times with them before major speeches," said Khachigian, and each time, she would contribute ideas and thoughts about "presentation."

"She had a very good sense of what he liked to do, and what made him tick. And she was his No. 1 cheerleader," the speechwriter said.

When she needed to, she also carried the ax. While Reagan was reluctant to scold anybody, or pass on some strong view, she never hesitated to be his messenger.

To Khachigian, Nancy Reagan ap-

peared to act as his surrogate, something he did not think she relished.

"People got the impression she loved being the bad cop, or tough guy," he said. "But she felt that was part of their partnership."

In "Bare Knuckles and Back Rooms," his 1996 memoir about life as a political consultant, Ed Rollins



Ronald and Nancy Reagan posed in 1976, in their 24th year of marriage. He called her "Mommy"; she was his closest friend and confidant.

— who often tangled with Nancy Reagan — gives her her due.

"He would never have been president . . . without his wife," Rollins wrote. But unlike her husband, he noted, Nancy Reagan was terribly insecure. "She didn't trust anyone. It took very little to get her worked up; when she thought somebody on

the staff was becoming a political liability for her husband, his or her days were numbered."

If Reagan had a weakness, said Martin Anderson, it was that he tended to believe that people told the truth; or, they would push things they wanted done — something Nancy Reagan was keenly aware of.

Cannon agrees. "More so than other presidents' wives . . . and I think they all have good antennas, she was exceptional."

Role in policy

And if, as Cannon says, Reagan's legacy will be determined by the fact that he "midwived" the end of the Cold War in 1989, his wife is part of that legacy.

"She didn't cause him to seek out the Soviets and do arms control. But she always supported the best qualities in him, and reinforced his best instincts," he said.

More than anyone else, Cannon said, it was Nancy Reagan who persuaded her husband to acknowledge his responsibility for the Iranian arms sales.

The controversy erupted in the fall of 1986, after it was reported that the United States had been supplying military spare parts to Iran, and that it was linked to the possible release of American hostages in Lebanon. Some of the estimated \$30 million Iran had paid had been diverted to the Nicaraguan Contras. In fact, Reagan said he had not been informed by his subordinates of the details linked to the transaction and was caught off-guard.

Though he convened news conferences to explain what he knew of the story, Americans — whom the "Great Communicator" had always swayed before — didn't believe him.

"I don't think he would have been able to finish out his term" without apologizing, Cannon said. "It was Nancy more than anybody else who got Reagan to face up to his errors," he said. "And that is a stunning thing."

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RONALD WILSON REAGAN | 1911-2004

“Ronald Reagan embodied California as Tomorrowland. Reagan projected an image of optimism that people came to associate with California.” JACK PITNEY, PROFESSOR OF GOVERNMENT AT CLAREMONT MCKENNA COLLEGE

Alzheimer's sufferers die once, then again

FOR 'GREAT COMMUNICATOR,' MIND HAD FADED LONG AGO

By Lisa M. Krieger
Mercury News

It is said that a person with Alzheimer's disease dies two deaths: one when the mind stops, the other when the heart stops.

Long before Ronald Reagan's heart stopped, the disease had begun to silence the mind of a man known as “the Great Communicator.” Alzheimer's disease has a gradual onset and progresses as nerve cells are increasingly destroyed by abnormal deposits of protein. The speed varies from person to person.

While the disease has a well-earned reputation for robbing the mind, less well known is its theft of the body as well.

“It is not a situation where there is direct neurologic damage to basic vital functions. It doesn't destroy the brain-stem center that controls respiration or heart rate,” said Bruce Reed, associate director of the University of California-Davis Alzheimer's Disease Center in Martinez and Sacramento.

“Rather, it puts you at tremendous risk for a variety of other problems,” he said.

As dementia progresses, patients become less connected to the world and spend more time in bed. Immobility puts patients at risk of a variety of problems, according to the experts. In some cases, where artificial feeding or hydration is not available, patients may starve to death because of their inability to swallow.

Reagan's four main White House doctors say they saw no evidence that he had symptoms as president. The first significant hints that Reagan was becoming demented came in September 1992, three years and eight months after he left office.

That month, he made a campaign speech

IN REAGAN'S OWN WORDS

“I now begin the journey that will lead me into the sunset of my life.”

— RONALD REAGAN, IN A 1994 HANDWRITTEN NOTE REVEALING HE HAD ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

for President George H.W. Bush in Yorba Linda, speaking more slowly than in the past. After the speech, White House physician Dr. Lawrence C. Mohr said Reagan seemed unusually distant, then turned to him and asked, “What am I supposed to do next?” There was a blank look on his face.

In September 1994, Reagan had trouble reading from a TelePrompTer while making videotapes in support of Republican candidates.

The following month, in a handwritten letter, Reagan told the American people that he had entered the early stages of Alzheimer's disease. “I now begin the journey,” he wrote, “that will lead me into the sunset of my life.”

Until the late 1990s, according to friends, the former president remained in good physical health — able to put a golf tee down and set a ball on it. He dressed himself, with help, and could tie a Windsor knot.

But then he began a gradual descent painfully familiar to the families and friends of the 4 million Americans who share his fate — a growing public health problem in our aging society.

The precise cause of Alzheimer's disease is not known, but it makes parts of the brain degenerate, reducing nerve connections. Areas of the brain that influence short-term memory tend to be affected first. Later, the disease works its way into sections that control other intellectual and physical functions. Eventually, patients lose their ability to walk, speak and control bodily functions.

Although his wife, Nancy, has stayed out of the spotlight in recent years, she has spoken up in favor of embryonic stem cell research, unlike Republicans within the Bush administration. Scientists hope stem cells could help them replace neurons and restore neural circuits that are lost to Alzheimer's.

Reagan's decline was more gradual than most: Death comes to half of all patients within seven years, according to the Alzheimer's Disease Research Program. It can last as long as 20 years.

Although the onset of Alzheimer's disease cannot be stopped or reversed, there are medications that can help control symptoms of the disease. Medication also can help manage the mood shifts that often occur as the disease progresses.

Five approved drugs can control the symptoms and slow the progression of Alzheimer's disease. Their brand names are Cognex, Aricept, Exelon, Reminyl and Namenda. Dozens of compounds are being studied in the search for medications to help individuals with Alzheimer's disease.

Scientists hope it may be possible someday to delay the onset of the disease through existing treatments, such as anti-inflammatory, anti-oxidants or hormone replacement therapy.

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THE CALIFORNIAN

Movie star, rancher, governor:
Reagan embodied the Golden State



Reagan was frequently photographed in Western attire, such as this shot of him preparing for a ride in Santa Barbara in 1980.



Reagan snaps a salute to U.S. troops during a visit to Iceland in 1986 after a mini-summit with Mikhail Gorbachev.



Reagan carried his Western frontier image into foreign policy, becoming synonymous with California around the world.

FROM COWBOY HATS TO CAN-DO ATTITUDE, HE HELPED MOLD PERCEPTION OF STATE

By Jim Puzanghera

Mercury News Washington Bureau

Ronald Reagan played many parts in his life — the handsome movie actor, the tough-talking governor, the fierce Cold Warrior, the man-of-the-people president — but he had one recurring role: Californian.

Of course, he wasn't actually born here. In true California fashion, he was a transplant. But Reagan came to adore his adopted state, praising it in lavish terms he normally reserved for the other loves of his life: his wife, Nancy, and the United States of America.

During the eight years he spent on the planet's loftiest stage, he helped mold the world's image of California, projecting a can-do attitude and a Wild West bravado. He topped it off by frequently donning a cowboy hat.

“There's no more conspicuous Californian in this last quarter-century than Ronald Reagan,” said David Kennedy, a history professor at Stanford University.

By the time Reagan left the White House in 1989, California was firmly entrenched as a national harbinger of cultural and economic trends, a forward-looking reputation only enhanced by Silicon Valley's emergence in the 1990s.

Reagan was largely responsible for that new perception, Kennedy said, partly by taking a cue from California's property tax revolt of the late 1970s and translating it into federal tax cuts during his presidency.

“He typifies the image of California in many respects,” Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., said Saturday. “It's can-do, it's risk-taking, it's cutting-edge, and he was all of that.”

At a rally in Cupertino on the day he opened his 1984 re-election campaign, Reagan demonstrated that optimism, praising the advances being developed in Silicon Valley while deriding the “pack of pessimists that are roaming our land.”

“America has always been greatest when she dared to be great,” he told a cheering crowd at De Anza College. “I'm convinced we will be leaders in developing these frontiers, because the American people would rather reach for the stars than reach for excuses why we shouldn't.”

Emotional ties

But there was also a more visceral connection between Reagan and California, a romantic attraction that he often conveyed when talking about the state.

“I've had a love affair with California for many years. It's only increased as the years have gone by,” Reagan told a crowd in Los Angeles in 1981, just days before he and Nancy headed east for his first inauguration. “We have looked at our rapidly emptying house, and we've looked many long last looks at every vista. I always thought I never wanted to leave.”

He didn't, really. During his eight years as president, Reagan spent more than an entire year — 436 days — in California.

Like many transplants, Reagan was drawn to California by the promise of soft winter breezes and bountiful sunshine.

“After I started broadcasting the Cubs' games,” Reagan wrote in his 1990 autobiography of his early job as a baseball announcer in Iowa, “I concocted a plan to escape part of the frigid Iowa winter by offering to accompany the team to its annual spring training camp in California.”

To the native of a small Midwestern town, who had never been west of Kansas City, California beckoned like a picture postcard.

Reagan packed for the beach on his first trip, loading his suitcase with “white buckskins, linen suits, white sports coats, and, of course, swimming trunks,” he recalled in his 1965 autobiography, “Where's the Rest of Me? The Ronald Reagan Story.”

California quickly grew on young Reagan. It was a working 10-day vacation for three winters starting in 1935, but Reagan thought of it as an “all-expense paid holiday under the California sun.”

It changed his life. During his trip in 1937, Reagan skipped out on the Cubs' Catalina Island training camp and headed to

Hollywood. He landed an acting contract with Warner Bros. California became his home.

Reagan adopted a new lifestyle. The former lifeguard at a riverside beach in his hometown of Dixon, Ill., body-surfed in the vast Pacific. He rode horses. Later, he and Nancy bought a 350-acre mountain ranch in Agoura Hills near Malibu.

“Ronald Reagan was the quintessential Californian. He came from the Midwest seeking opportunity and was successful,” said Rep. Dana Rohrabacher, R-Huntington Beach, a former Reagan speech writer. “Ronald Reagan may have been born and raised in Illinois, but he became Ronald Reagan in California.”

Exuded California

Only a few presidents have had strong California connections. Herbert Hoover was in the first class at Stanford University. Richard Nixon is the only native Californian to become president.

But Nixon wasn't as attached to the state as Reagan was. He rarely spoke of it with the fondness that Reagan did. And no politician exuded California like Reagan.

“Nixon just didn't have a public persona that said California,” Kennedy said. “The way he dressed, the way he presented himself, the kind of issues he addressed, just didn't say California, whereas Reagan was proud of it.”

When White House journalists persuaded Nixon to be photographed walking along the beach below his San Clemente estate, he took to the sand in jacket, tie and wingtip shoes. But Reagan donned blue jeans and cowboy boots to ride horseback on his ranch.

And while Nixon's estate was sold in the late 1970s and subdivided into what now are mostly vacant lots, Reagan's ranch was bought by a conservative group and has been turned into a monument to conservatism, with students visiting it as part of weekend conferences and leadership retreats. Close associates said Reagan never gave a thought to locating his Simi Valley presidential library in his home state of Illinois — it was always destined for California.

Critics said Reagan's love of the natural beauty of California didn't translate into strong environmental policy to protect those resources. But there's no doubt that when Reagan talked of California, he made it sound wild and wonderful.

“From the first day we saw it, Rancho del Cielo cast a spell over us. No place before or since has ever given Nancy and me the joy and serenity it does,” Reagan wrote in the 1990 autobiography, “Ronald Reagan: An American Life.” “From some points on the ranch, you can watch boats cruising across the Santa Barbara Channel, then turn your head and see the Santa Ynez Valley unfold like a huge wilderness amphitheater before your eyes.”

Whole world watched

Reagan lived a rustic, California mountain existence there — and the world saw it all.

“He was very much seen as a California man both for his links with the film industry and the television industry but also for the fact he adopted to himself those frontier-style images of cowboy clothes and horse riding,” said Philip John Davies, a professor of American studies at De Montfort University in Leicester, England. Reagan carried that frontier image into his foreign policy, all but challenging America's enemies to a high-noon gunfight.

That was one way in which Reagan became among the few presidents in the 20th century to be readily identified with a single place, Stanford's Kennedy said.

Reagan did it in his own style — a cowboy swagger and homespun tales of the beauty of California.

“Well, as I told a couple of ... heads of state from Europe,” he joked in 1984 when the governor's Cabinet room in Sacramento was named after him, “if they'd only discovered America from this side, the capital would be California.”

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RONALD WILSON REAGAN | 1911-2004

"Ronald Reagan may have been born and raised in Illinois, but he became Ronald Reagan in California." REP. DANA ROHRBACHER, R-HUNTINGTON BEACH

THE PRAGMATIST

Hollywood actor-turned-statesman wielded influence on California while in Sacramento and in Washington, D.C.



ASSOCIATED PRESS ARCHIVES

Liked by many across the country, Ronald Reagan, serving as governor of California, receives an enthusiastic greeting in Charlottesville, Va., in July 1968.

ANALYSIS

The Reagan years: a mix of hope and rage

POLITICAL MOVER, SHAKER HAD A WAY OF STIRRING ACTION

By Dion Nissenbaum
Mercury News

The Ronald Reagan that Americans came to know and love — or know and loathe — was no stranger to Californians. They watched him hone his disarming conservative style as governor. But Reagan may have had his biggest impact on his adopted home when he moved from the state Capitol to the nation's capital.

It was in Washington that Reagan launched the largest military buildup in American history. And California, more than any other state, reaped the rewards.

During the Reagan presidency, California received billions of federal dollars to pump up its defense and aerospace industries.

Money flowed to industry giants such as Sunnyvale's Lockheed, which, along with other Santa Clara County defense firms, took in \$5.4 billion in Pentagon contracts in 1986 alone. California rode the defense wave for years but was thrown hard when the funding subsided later in Reagan's second White House term.

There was an incongruity in Reagan's military buildup: Though it led to a deep recession in the 1990s that forced thousands of embittered defense workers into the unemployment line, it helped lay the groundwork for the state's technology renaissance by providing skilled workers and the basic research that spawned the Internet age.

Such dichotomies were a hallmark of Reagan's life, particularly during his two terms as governor from 1967 to 1975.

He staunchly defended law enforcement and refused to stop the execution of a cop killer. But he was the last California governor to pardon a death row inmate. He was anti-abortion but signed a state law dramatically expanding women's access to the controversial procedure.

He opposed the creation of a new national park for California's stately redwoods. "I saw them," he said at the time. "There is nothing beautiful about them, just that they are a little higher than the others." But he



ASSOCIATED PRESS ARCHIVES

Ronald Reagan, who served as governor of California from 1967 to 1975, addresses reporters after a long legislative session in December 1971.

stopped President Nixon from carving a new highway through the Sierra.

He fought an initiative that would have banned gay teachers from the classroom but forced out two members of his own Cabinet after his staff said the men were gay.

He railed against government bureaucracy but approved what was then California's largest tax increase.

"I think the interesting thing about Reagan was how much of a pragmatic politician he was. I think his rhetoric was much more conservative than his actions."

— ROBERT DALLEK, AUTHOR OF "RONALD REAGAN: THE POLITICS OF SYMBOLISM"

"I think the interesting thing about Reagan was how much of a pragmatic politician he was," said Robert Dallek, author of "Ronald Reagan: The Politics of Symbolism" and a professor at Boston University. "I think his rhetoric was much more conservative than his actions."

Reagan biographer Lou Cannon, who covered Reagan for the Washington Post and the Mercury News, agreed: "Reagan was not a radical; he was not a right-winger. He was a very pragmatic guy."

What Reagan was not able to move with actions, he was sometimes able to move with words. Long before Arnold Schwarzenegger brought his silver screen celebrity to Sacramento, Reagan brought Hollywood drama to political life, filling some with hope and others with rage.

Nowhere was that clearer than in his turbulent relationship with the University of California.

When he took office as governor, the university system was in turmoil. The anti-war and free speech movements had brought an angry new activism to campuses, particularly at Berkeley.

Reagan had promised to "clean up Berkeley" — a campaign pledge that roiled student protesters, heartened law-and-order Californians and was instrumental in helping the GOP candidate oust popular Democratic Gov. Edmund "Pat" Brown.

Once elected, Reagan set out to orchestrate the ouster of UC President Clark Kerr, who was criticized for not cracking down on Berkeley activists.

Reagan entered the climactic board of regents meeting protected by armed guards. Kerr was voted out, sparking another round of protests that foreshadowed even bigger problems.

In 1969, Berkeley again erupted as students fought a university plan to build new dormitories on a 2.8-acre

plot of dirt near campus that had been transformed by activists into People's Park, now the city's most prominent legacy of the era.

Protesters and sheriff's deputies engaged in running street battles that left dozens on both sides injured. Demonstrators hurled bricks and bottles. Deputies fired tear gas canisters, killing one demonstrator and blinding another.

Before it was over, Reagan declared a four-month state of emergency and called out the National Guard, which patrolled the streets in armored vehicles for 17 days.

But the biggest change Reagan brought to the UC system was the imposition of tuition on campuses long hailed for providing low-cost quality education. That plan opened the door for future governors to target student fees in tight fiscal times.

In his book "Triumph of the Right," author Kurt Schuparra described Reagan as "the prototype of the new conservative populist."

His 1967 gubernatorial election marked a turning point for conservatives who had been battered by voters' embarrassing rebuke of GOP presidential candidate Barry Goldwater in 1964. Unlike Goldwater's sour and acidic brand of conservatism, Reagan offered a strong, optimistic vision.

His endearing style often disarmed even his most seasoned opponents, who consistently underestimated the Hollywood actor.

"He was incredibly bright and brilliant," said Martin Anderson, a fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution and a senior adviser to Reagan. "He was tough. He was ruthless when he wanted something done. He was extraordinarily effective, and that may be what drove his political enemies crazy."

But even his political adversaries learned. As Cannon noted, every governor since Reagan, including Democrats Jerry Brown and Gray Davis, has won the election by pushing for smaller, more effective government.

"What Reagan did — and he didn't do it alone — was to end the kind of liberal New Deal governorship of California," Cannon said.

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scottherhold

The best acting of Reagan's career wasn't in films

From the moment he re-created baseball games at an Iowa radio station to his call for Americans to strive for the "shining city upon a hill," Ronald Reagan mixed fantasy and reality, fact and fiction, pathos and patter. In the end, most of us bought the myth.

The actor turned politician appealed to the American impatience with ambiguity. He convinced people he stood for something. He was against big government. He opposed abortion. He loathed taxes.

But what let him govern — what made him popular even among his adversaries — was a kind of genial hypocrisy, a willingness to check his rhetoric at the cloakroom of pragmatic compromise.

As governor of California, the man who inveighed against taxes passed the biggest tax increase to that point in state history. Any historian can cite a dozen similar examples of how his words and behavior diverged.

Above all, as a veteran actor, Reagan knew how to deliver his lines, even when they bore little relation to reality. And his genius as a politician was that most people forgave him, even when he sheltered troublemakers or strayed from facts.

Hard to believe

Was there a problem with Iran-Contra in his White House? Well, perhaps. But surely it couldn't be the fault of the master mythmaker. Surely he was out of the loop.

Was it true that he really didn't photograph Nazi death camps at the end of World War II — as he once claimed — and instead spent the war making propaganda movies in Hollywood? Well, yes, but the point is that he got choked up when he talked about the camps. He hated Nazis.

Even toward the end, in 1994, when he wrote that heartbreaking note announcing that he had Alzheimer's, it was hard to believe him when he said he intended to keep doing what he had always done. We knew the reality was much uglier. But his devotees wanted him to ride off into the sunset like the victorious cowboy in one of his westerns.

The heart of Reagan's appeal was that he presented the majority with a vision of the world as they wanted it to be, not as it was: There was no ambivalence in his speeches, no shades of gray. We were the good guys. The Soviets were the evil empire. Big government was bad. The strong Western man chopping wood on his ranch was good.

The source of his Teflon — his protection when things went wrong — was an affable personality, a bob of the head, a deft ability to poke fun at himself. And so his one-liners — "I forgot to duck," he said after the assassination attempt — disarmed his critics more surely than any Electoral College vote. A country that had been seared by Watergate and Vietnam lapped it up.

The legacy

Of course, there was a downside: The federal deficit tripled under Reagan's presidency. As governor and president, he relied on ideologues who got his administration into trouble. And the Reagan years worked better for some than others: the white, the wealthy, the military contractors, not the minorities, the disabled or the poor.

In California, you can see his legacy today in Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, who, like Reagan, prefers to keep the script simple — and who, like Reagan, has governed more moderately than some of his supporters expected.

You can catch glimpses of it, too, in the us-vs.-them rhetoric of President George W. Bush — though Reagan was always more willing to deal with his Democratic counterparts than the current Bush team has been.

In the end, Reagan will be remembered more for his skill as a communicator than for any single achievement. Yes, he may have sullied our hopeful view of government. But he could cheerfully step away from his own dogma. His best performance came after his movie career ended.

RONALD WILSON REAGAN | 1911-2004

“His California task was to modernize and streamline government. You had a sense at the end of eight years that state government was in good shape.” EDWIN MEESE III, REAGAN'S ATTORNEY GENERAL

1967 - 1975

THE GOVERNOR



MERCURY NEWS ARCHIVES

California gubernatorial candidate Ronald Reagan rides in a convertible while receiving a ticker-tape parade in San Francisco's Financial district on Nov. 3, 1966. Reagan went on to beat incumbent Gov. Edmund "Pat" Brown Sr. by nearly 1 million votes. Reagan was re-elected in 1970, defeating Democrat Jess Unruh.



MERCURY NEWS ARCHIVES

Gov. Reagan presides over the lighting of a holiday tree in 1974. Reagan had never held public office before winning the California governorship. He first gained national political prominence delivering a speech during the failed presidential campaign of Barry Goldwater in 1964, raising \$8 million in the process.



ASSOCIATED PRESS ARCHIVES



MERCURY NEWS ARCHIVES

Reagan's campaign stops before the 1966 included the San Jose Country Club, above. He was joined by his Santa Clara County campaign chairman, Vernon Cristina. After the election, left, Reagan is greeted by the defeated incumbent Brown in the Capitol building in Sacramento.



ASSOCIATED PRESS ARCHIVES

Among the controversies Reagan dealt with during his tenure was Berkeley's People's Park, on which the University of California wanted to build dormitories. During the protests, he called out the National Guard and declared a state of emergency for four months.

RONALD WILSON REAGAN | 1911-2004

“Reagan is as revolutionary a figure in the Republican Party as FDR was in the Democratic Party — I think future Republicans will talk about the Reagan years.” **FRANK DONATELLI, FORMER REAGAN POLITICAL DIRECTOR**

THE ECONOMY

Reagan's fiscal policies had mixed results for nation, Silicon Valley tech industry

REAGAN'S TIES TO SILICON VALLEY

As governor, campaigner and president, Ronald Reagan drew heavily on San Jose and its environs for his aides and associates.

San Jose State and Stanford universities supplied him with no fewer than nine of his foremost appointees and advisers. All four of his U.S. Supreme Court appointees had Stanford connections.

Former members of the San Jose Mercury News editorial staff were closely identified with Reagan. The roster of his associates from this part of California is varied:

■ **Michael K. Deaver**, one of Reagan's closest confidants both in Sacramento and Washington, cut his political teeth in the mid-1960s as the sole staffer of the Santa Clara County Republican Central Committee.

■ **Lyn Nofziger**, Reagan's first press secretary in Sacramento, studied journalism at San Jose State in the early 1950s. He became one of the “presidentialists” who charted Reagan's road from the state Capitol to the White House.

■ **Ed Rollins**, White House political director during Reagan's first term, also is a San Jose State alum.

■ **George Shultz**, Reagan's second secretary of state, was a Stanford professor in the 1970s and 1980s and later a fellow at the university's Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace.

■ **Martin Anderson**, an economic adviser to both Reagan and Richard Nixon, also was a Hoover Institution fellow. He later became a trustee of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation.

■ **Sandra Day O'Connor**, appointed in 1981 by Reagan as the Supreme Court's first female justice, graduated from Stanford in 1950 and earned her law degree there two years later. Her first job thereafter was as a deputy county attorney in San Mateo.

■ **Chief Justice William Rehnquist**, elevated by Reagan in 1986, earned his law degree at Stanford in 1952 after previously receiving bachelor's and master's degrees there.

■ **Justice Anthony Kennedy**, named to the court by Reagan in 1988, graduated from Stanford in 1958 and subsequently received an honorary law degree from Santa Clara University.

■ **Justice Antonin Scalia**, appointed by Reagan in 1986, was a visiting professor at the Stanford Law School from 1980 to 1981.

■ **Spencer Williams**, a one-time Santa Clara County counsel and now a federal judge, held Cabinet rank as Reagan's health and welfare administrator in Sacramento.

■ **Lou Cannon**, Reagan's most prolific biographer, observed Reagan's entire political career at close range, first in the Sacramento and Washington bureaus of the Mercury News and later as the White House reporter for the Washington Post. Cannon has written three books about Reagan.

■ **Robert Lindsey**, a former Mercury News reporter, collaborated with Reagan on his autobiography, “An American Life,” after he left the presidency. From the Mercury News he went to the New York Times.

■ **Caspar W. Weinberger**, who served Reagan as finance director in Sacramento and as secretary of defense in Washington, began his political career in 1952, when he was elected from San Francisco to the California Assembly, in which he served three terms. He later lived in Hillsborough.

■ **Edwin Meese**, whose first job with Reagan was as legal affairs (clemency) secretary in Sacramento, followed him to Washington and eventually became his attorney general. Later, Meese became a Hoover Institution fellow at Stanford. In the mid-1950s, he served as a deputy district attorney in Alameda County.

TAX CUTS, INCREASED MILITARY SPENDING RESULTED IN HUGE BUDGET DEFICITS, BUT MAY HAVE OPENED DOOR TO WEALTH CREATION AND END OF THE COLD WAR

By Jonathan Rabinovitz and Matt Marshall
Mercury News

Silicon Valley's current downturn is strikingly similar to the mid-1980s, during President Reagan's second term, when the valley was one of the few regions suffering a recession.

Today, the region still faces more joblessness than the rest of the nation, largely a hangover from the excesses of the Internet boom.

Back then, Silicon Valley saw a dozen of its largest companies declare bankruptcy. Acres of new office buildings went vacant. Companies that promised never to lay off employees were letting them go by the thousands.

“It is not a pretty thing — particularly in the human displacement: the layoffs, the short-circuited careers, the collapsed stock portfolios, the evaporating pensions,” remarked commentator Michael Malone in 1985. “Can Silicon Valley survive not just five more years, but 10? ... Here my outlook is not so positive.”

The economic turnaround came several years later, culminating in the great rush and wealth of the Internet boom.

Scholars and policy wonks are still debating whether Reagan's free-market philosophy laid the foundation for that 1990s economic juggernaut.

Reagan's economic policies, known as Reaganomics, included reducing tax rates and accelerating depreciation, encouraging the Federal Reserve to end inflation and cutting back government regulation.

Its theoretical underpinnings came from a school of thought known as supply-side economics, which argues that lowering taxes on producers boosts the economy and increases tax revenue.

Supply-siders maintain that the reduction in tax rates altered the government's role in the economy and restored the nation's economic health.

“Do you see any politicians trying to raise the rate back to 70 percent?” remarked economist Arthur Laffer, a key supply-side theorist.

As for Reagan's budget deficits, incurred as the government spent more than it took in, Laffer said, “So we ran a deficit — big deal. If it was permanent, that would have been a problem.”

The tax cut opened the door for a decade of wealth-building unlike any this country had seen before, and Silicon Valley ultimately shared in that prosperity, Laffer said.

Richard Carlson, a Palo Alto economist who has tracked the valley since the 1970s, said of the Reagan era: “I don't think that administration thought about Silicon Valley at all, and there were some parts of their program that really hurt us.”

Carlson, who leads consulting firm Spectrum Economics, said the economic benefits of the end of the Cold War, which many credit to Reagan, were the basis of the nation's economic strength



Former President Reagan uses a hammer and chisel on the defunct Berlin Wall in 1990 after the end of the Cold War. Many high-tech companies benefited from increased military spending during the Reagan administration.

in the 1990s.

Reagan ran annual deficits higher in real dollars than any other post-World War II president except his successor, George Bush, the current president's father. The national debt doubled from \$1,004 trillion in 1981 to \$2,028 trillion in 1989.

“It was a waste of resources,” said Kenneth Arrow, a Nobel Prize-winning economist and Stanford University professor. “That money could have gone into the private sector.”

In the 1980s, interest rates quintupled after adjusting for inflation, and for the first time in modern history the United States became a debtor nation.

David Stockman, who in 1985 resigned as Reagan's budget director, said the approach had mutated from a vision of “inflation-less capitalist prosperity” to a “free-lunch message and a mindless political addiction to tax cutting without regard to the fiscal consequences.”

The Reagan administration's obliviousness to the potential harm was most apparent in its treatment of commercial real estate. The 1981 tax bill halved the depreciation schedule for such property. While the provision was repealed in 1986, it fueled a nationwide building

boom that led to an unprecedented real estate glut.

Silicon Valley had an extra 20 million square feet of commercial space in the early 1990s, said Carlson, the regional economist. “That tax law sucked money away from technology investments to building shopping centers.”

At the start of Reagan's second term, Silicon Valley high-tech companies found themselves at a competitive disadvantage globally. The tax cuts had not led to a flood of new investment. The deficit had caused interest rates to rise, making it more difficult to borrow money.

And the Reagan administration had backed a strong dollar, meaning that U.S. goods were more expensive abroad, while foreign imports were cheaper domestically.

The impact pushed tech companies like Apple Computer, Intel and Advanced Micro Devices to lay off thousands.

The Reagan administration's response? Mostly hands-off.

This led to a fundamental restructuring in Silicon Valley that purged older, less competitive firms.

“Thank God that happened,” said Carlson of the 1980s restructuring.

“Reagan moved us out of the commodity sector of electronics that otherwise we would have been in it much longer. As a result, the Japanese and the Taiwanese make most of the semiconductors, most of the components and many of the key assemblies, while we do the design and make most of the money.”

Several former Reagan aides also argued that the military buildup left an even greater legacy: a freer world in which the United States has greater access to global markets.

“You can't view Reaganomics separately from the Cold War,” said Annelise Anderson, a senior research fellow at the Hoover Institution. “He had enormous confidence in the free-enterprise system and believed that the Soviets could not compete.”

Reagan's larger contribution may be more abstract: his championing of capitalism.

“The real legacy of Reaganomics is that it was a major sea change in the 20th-century perception of free markets,” Anderson said. “It was much bigger than just: ‘We ought to cut taxes.’”

Jonathan Rabinovitz is a former Mercury News staff writer.



Ronald Reagan and three other former presidents join then-President George H.W. Bush at the dedication ceremonies of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley on Nov. 5, 1991. From left, Bush, Reagan, Jimmy Carter, Gerald Ford and Richard Nixon.

RONALD WILSON REAGAN | 1911-2004

"The guy who gets the most salutes and inspired the devotion was Reagan. Reagan almost single-handedly rebuilt the morale of the armed forces." **DINESH D'SOUZA, AUTHOR OF "RONALD REAGAN: HOW AN ORDINARY MAN BECAME AN EXTRAORDINARY LEADER"**

THE POLITICS

Amiable cold warrior used skills honed as an actor to deliver stark message on good and evil



J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE — ASSOCIATED PRESS ARCHIVES

After approving a passel of budget reforms, Ronald Reagan shakes hands with Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill, a Massachusetts Democrat, while Rep. Tom Foley, D-Wash., Rep. Dan Rostenkowski, D-Ill., and Rep. Richard Bolling, D-Mo., look on.

'GREAT COMMUNICATOR' SET THE STANDARD FOR BOTH PARTIES

By **Mary Anne Ostrom**
Mercury News

Fifteen years have passed since Ronald Reagan left the White House, but the nation's 40th president continues to cast a long shadow over American and California politics.

Republicans still worship the man who came to personify their party for three decades, hoping to cloak themselves in the Reagan mantle.

Arnold Schwarzenegger, whose candidacy drew obvious comparisons to California's first actor-governor, embraced Reagan's legacy, even hiring a former Reagan speechwriter and peppering his speeches with Reaganesque phrases.

During his inaugural address in November, Schwarzenegger evoked Reagan's characterization of America as "the shining city on the hill." Schwarzenegger told Californians, "I see California as the golden dream by the sea."

But Reagan biographers and loyalists say that few Republican politicians truly understand the Reagan legacy they so vigorously champion.

"Their idea is we need a leader like Reagan, who is an unabashed conservative and who never gives in and who just says it like it is. That's a caricature of Reagan," said Lou Cannon, former political reporter for the Washington Post and Mercury News, who has written three books on Reagan.

"In real life, he was a much more practical man," Cannon said. "If he wasn't there, the conservative movement today wouldn't be where it is. But they are looking for a person who doesn't exist, a Ronald Reagan of their imagination."

In a party struggling with the concept of a "big tent," Reagan's term for an inclusive GOP, he was the center pole.

Candidates today marvel at Reagan's ability to woo both the moral right and the moderate wings.

"He won elections by appealing to many different bases," said longtime Reagan confidant and former Attorney General Edwin Meese. "He was probably the most pro-life president we've ever had. But at the same time he didn't castigate as evil those who disagreed with him."

In accepting his party's nomination for a second term in 1984, Reagan asked, "Isn't our choice really not one of left or right, but of up or down?"

Reagan's politics not only dramatically reshaped his own party but permanently changed the electorate's view of government and politicians.

Perhaps Reagan's most enduring achievement as president was to declare war on the very institution he led. While he may have united his party, critics contend his relentless attacks on government tore at the very roots of democracy, fostering civic mistrust and apathy. In one of his best-remembered lines, Reagan declared in his inaugural address of 1981, "Government is not the solution to our problem. Government is the problem."

Such pronouncements are now standard fodder for both parties.

"He changed the center of gravity of the debate," said Michael Schroeder, a former Reagan advance man who was chairman of the California Republican Party.

"The debate before Ronald Reagan was: Should we balance the budget and should we cut the size of government? Now the debate is how much should we cut, how much should we pay down the national deficit? He won the argument," Schroeder said.

Even his staunchest supporters concede the Reagan legacy is morphing into Reagan myth.

"Ronald Reagan has transcended legacy. I think he's transformed into legend," said Martin Anderson, a Hoover Institution fellow who served as a domestic and economic policy adviser.

Whether battling the Cold War or trying to cultivate an economic boom, Reagan's secret in communicating with Americans lay in his ability to cast the world in stark terms of good and evil, disarming critics of his pro-military, pro-business agenda. Today, President Bush routinely uses similar rhetoric to win support for his policies.

In his first State of the Union speech after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, Bush said Iran, Iraq and North Korea "constitute an axis of evil."

Reagan came on the national scene during troubled times and worked at being the soothing antidote for worried Americans.

"You had the Soviet Union marching through Afghanistan," Meese said. "Interest rates were at 21 percent. Inflation at 12 percent. . . Gas shortages. There obviously was great opportunity to give a message to the country."

Although labeled a great com-

unicator, Reagan practiced delivering his lines, drawing on his acting experience.

Said Ken Khachigian, Republican strategist and former speechwriter, "He always had this feeling, time enough and world enough, he could convince anybody of the rightness of where he was going. He gave the conservative movement voice."

But Reagan promised more than he could deliver. He won the presidency on a platform to cut taxes, ratchet up defense spending and balance the budget. He doubled defense spending, but the national debt rocketed from \$995 billion to \$2.9 trillion during his watch.

As governor, the champion of tax cuts promised in his inaugural address to "cut, squeeze and trim," then presented Californians with their biggest tax increase up to that time. By the time he left office, state spending per capita had more than doubled.

"The rhetoric of Reagan reducing the size of government always overran the reality," Cannon said. To this day, Reagan serves as the consummate model for today's Republican seekers of the presidency. "They often say, 'Now, what would Ronald Reagan have done?'" said Hoover's Anderson, who advised George W. Bush in 2000. "His influence is enormously powerful."

Yet critics argue that Reagan's anti-tax, anti-government message has led to unhealthy consequences. He started in California in the 1960s, setting a spiral into motion that began with the under-funding of schools and other public services, led to the tax revolts of the late 1970s and now has left the state needing to spend billions to resurrect public services.

"It turned people against government, without being selective of which parts of government were weak and what parts were essential," said A. Alan Post, who was California's independent legislative analyst from 1949 to 1977.

His legacy today, said Post, is that candidates "all take the no-tax pledge, it's become a litmus test" with little consideration for the consequences.

But candidates in both parties still yearn to re-create the Reagan model that catapulted him to huge victories. Schwarzenegger casts himself as an inclusive Republican and won significant support from independents and Democrats in the 2003 election to recall Democratic Gov. Gray Davis.

"Will there be another Ronald Reagan?" Schroeder mused. "It's like saying, 'Who will be the next Michael Jordan?' No one."

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IN REAGAN'S WORDS

"Public servants say, always with the best of intentions, 'What greater service we could render if only we had a little more money and a little more power.' But the truth is that outside of its legitimate function, government does nothing as well or as economically as the private sector."

— FROM "THE SPEECH" IN BARRY GOLDWATER'S PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN, OCT. 27, 1964

"A few months ago, I told the American people I did not trade arms for hostages. My heart and my best intentions still tell me that is true, but the facts and the evidence tell me it is not."

— FROM A SPEECH, 1987

"With our eyes fixed on the future, but recognizing the realities of today . . . we will achieve our destiny to be a shining city on a hill for all mankind to see."

— MARCH 17, 1978

"I don't believe that our Founding Fathers ever intended to create a nation where the rights of pornographers would take precedence over the rights of parents, and the violent and malevolent would be given free rein to prey upon our children."

— FROM A SPEECH AT A FUNDRAISING LUNCHEON, OCT. 10, 1985

"I have only one thing to say to the tax increasers — go ahead, make my day."

— ON CONGRESS CONSIDERING A TAX BILL, MARCH 1985

"My fellow Americans: I'm pleased to tell you today that I've signed legislation that will outlaw Russia forever. We begin bombing in five minutes."

— JESTING COMMENT WHILE TESTING A MICROPHONE BEFORE A BROADCAST, AUG. 11, 1984

"Government is not the solution to our problem. Government is the problem."

— FROM INAUGURAL ADDRESS, JAN. 20, 1981

"Politics is just like show business. You have a hell of an opening, coast for a while and then have a hell of a close."

— TOLD TO CAMPAIGN STRATEGIST STU SPENCER, 1966



MARK J. TERRILL — ASSOCIATED PRESS ARCHIVES

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger is shown with a sculpture of Ronald Reagan in 2002. Many have compared the two.

RONALD WILSON REAGAN | 1911-2004

"He believed that America was on the right side of history, standing with the forces of good, against the forces of evil." FORMER PRESIDENT RICHARD M. NIXON, AT THE DEDICATION OF THE REAGAN PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY, NOV. 4, 1991

THE LEGACY

His abhorrence of communism shaped an era



REAGAN GUIDED U.S. POLICY TO CONFRONT, NOT CONTAIN, 'EVIL EMPIRE' OVERSEAS

By Steve Goldstein
Knight Ridder

There was nothing in Ronald Reagan's life before the White House to suggest that he was destined to change the world, but change it he most certainly did.

With views formed in the crucible of World War II and as an actor and a union leader in the Red Scare days of the early Cold War, Reagan's almost visceral abhorrence of communism as a threat to American ideals of freedom and free enterprise formed his entire approach to foreign policy.

From his branding of the Soviet Union as the "evil empire" and his exhortation to tear down the Berlin Wall to the Iran-Contra affair and U.S. actions in Angola and Afghanistan, Reagan showed an unwavering zeal for obliterating communism on all fronts.

Yet history will always pair Reagan with his foil, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, a disdainful foe turned steadfast friend.

Reagan's was a foreign policy of moral certainty, a black-and-white view of the world that did not permit shadings of gray, a battleground that pitted totalitarianism against democracy, socialist strictures against American values.

Reagan came into the presidency with a post-Vietnam War sensibility: a wariness of battles that became quagmires and the large-scale commitment of American military might.

Never a detail man, President Reagan set the course and others sailed the ship.

The "Reagan Doctrine" prescribed support for anti-communist insurgents wherever they fought. It contrasted with the "containment" policy established during the Truman administration and allied with the "rollback" strategy of former Secretary of State John Foster Dulles in the 1950s.

The strategy included forming "truth squads" to counter Soviet claims, increasing spending for Radio Liberty and the Voice of America, smuggling books about democracy behind the Iron Curtain and encouraging the spread of fax machines and computers to expand the flow of information.

A 1983 national security directive stated that the keystone of U.S. policy toward the U.S.S.R. was "to contain and over time reverse Soviet expansionism."

The two most vivid applications occurred in Nicaragua and Afghanistan. In Nicaragua, the United States sponsored the Contra movement in an effort to force the leftist Sandinista government from power. The convoluted, illegal scheme — involving officials from the National Security Council and the CIA — sold arms to Iran at inflated prices and sent the profits to the Contras.



President Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev leave their final mini-summit meeting Oct. 12, 1986, in Reykjavik, Iceland.

Just as troubling, the plot's authors asked Iran, considered a terrorist nation by the United States, to use its influence with Muslim extremists who had kidnapped American citizens. Congressional hearings brought to light Reagan's detachment from a "shadow government" within his administration and a direct contradiction of a campaign pledge never to negotiate with terrorists.

An official 1987 report depicted Reagan as confused and uninformed. His relaxed "personal management style," the report said, had prevented him from controlling subordinates such as Lt. Col. Oliver North, who was indicted along with other high-ranking officials.

In Afghanistan, the U.S. provided material and technical support to the *mujahdeen* — Afghan rebels — fighting against the Soviet occupation of their country. The well-armed rebellion and the ultimate ejection of the Kremlin's forces seeded the growth of full-blown militant Islam, leading to civil war, the rise of the Taliban and Afghanistan's central role in the war on terror.

Surprisingly, it was Reagan's personal engagement with the Soviet Union and a charismatic communist that changed the course of history.

Washington and the Kremlin were at loggerheads during Reagan's first term. He was no Sovietologist, but Reagan correctly deduced that Moscow understood strength and fire-power, so he increased defense



Reagan's foreign policy was based on a black-and-white view of the world that did not permit shadings of gray, a battleground between totalitarianism and democracy, socialist strictures and American values.

President Reagan broadcasts an address to the Soviet people in November 1985 at the facilities of the Voice of America. His speech was broadcast to 50 nations.

LARRY RUBENSTEIN — UPI ARCHIVES

and, in 1987, the two leaders signed a historic treaty in Washington that would eliminate intermediate-range nuclear forces.

Ever the master of the pithy aphorism or anecdote, Reagan adopted a Russian maxim to explain his view of dealing with the Soviets: "*Doverai, no proverai*" — Trust, but verify.

In 1988, Reagan went to Moscow and famously allowed that the empire was no longer evil, even adding that "judging from what I read about *perestroika*, I could agree with a lot of it."

To Gorbachev, this meant that Reagan had correctly assumed in Iceland that he could do business with the Soviets. "I now realized why he had told me the other day he had prayed to God that the next president would be a man who would support this choice," Gorbachev wrote. "In my view, the 40th president of the United States will go down in history for his rare perception."

The Moscow 1988 summit was followed by a largely ceremonial affair in New York City in December 1988 that included President-elect George H.W. Bush. The Cold War had moved from thaw to the precipice of history.

One year earlier, standing at the Brandenburg Gate in West Berlin, Reagan had said, "General Secretary Gorbachev, if you seek peace, if you seek prosperity for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, if you seek liberalization: Come here to this gate! Mr. Gorbachev, open this gate. Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!"

spending and pushed SDI, the Strategic Defense Initiative, known as "star wars."

Warmer relations developed after Gorbachev emerged as the Soviet leader in 1985, but even after their first meeting in Geneva that year, Gorbachev recalled in his "Mem-

oirs" that "Reagan appeared to me not simply a conservative but a political 'dinosaur.'"

The real breakthrough came at the Reykjavik summit in spite of the failure to consummate an agreement to drastically cut nuclear arms. Reagan and Gorbachev forged a bond

The books

The Bully Pulpit: The Presidential Leadership of Ronald Reagan
William Ker Muir
Institute for Contemporary Studies, 1992

The Common Sense of an Uncommon Man: The Wit, Wisdom, and Eternal Optimism of Ronald Reagan
Michael Reagan
Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1998

Reagan: The Man and His Presidency
Deborah Hart Strober and Gerald S. Strober
Houghton Mifflin, 1998

October Surprise: America's Hostages in Iran and the Election of Ronald Reagan
Gary Sick
Times Books/Random House, 1991

The Power and the Glitter: The Hollywood-Washington Connection
Ronald Brownstein
Pantheon Books, 1990

Landslide: The Unmaking of the President, 1984-1988
Jan Mayer and Doyle McManus
Houghton Mifflin, 1988

Sleepwalking Through History: America in the Reagan Years
Haynes Johnson
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President Reagan: The Role of a Lifetime
Lou Cannon
Simon & Schuster, 1991

Dutch: A Memoir of Ronald Reagan
Edmund Morris
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Reagan's America: Innocents at Home
Garry Wills
Doubleday, 1987

Recollections of Reagan: A Portrait of Ronald Reagan
Peter Hannaford
William Morrow, 1997

Reagan: An American Story
Adriana Bosch
TV Books, 1998

The Web sites

More information about Reagan on the Web

Economic Justice Network's Reagan links:
www.taxpolicy.com/reagan.htm

Elizabeth's Classic Movie:
www.reelclassics.com/Actors/Reagan/reagan.htm

Information Please Almanac:
www.infoplease.com

Read his speeches online:
www.mercurynews.com

Infospect Software's California Governors:
www.infospect.com/govs.html#Reagan

Internet Public Library:
www.ipl.org/ref/POTUS/rwreagan.html

Ronald Reagan Home Page:
www.presidentreagan.info/

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library:
www.reagan.utexas.edu

White House:
www.whitehouse.gov/history/presidents/rr40.html

Source: Mercury News research

The namesakes

Some notable monuments named for Ronald Reagan

Reagan Center
Eureka College, Eureka, Ill., 1970

Ronald Reagan Bridge
Dixon, Ill., 1977-78

Ronald Reagan State Office Building
Los Angeles, 1991

Ronald Reagan Institute of Emergency Medicine
George Washington University, Washington, D.C., 1991

Ronald Reagan Library
Simi Valley, 1991

Ronald Reagan Highway
Cincinnati, 1993

USS Ronald Reagan
aircraft carrier, 1995

Alzheimer's Foundation's Ronald & Nancy Reagan Research Institute
Chicago, Ill., 1995

Ronald Reagan Freeway
Simi Valley, 1995

Ronald Reagan Highway
U.S. Highway 14 in Illinois, 1996

Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport
Alexandria, Va., 1998

Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center
Washington, D.C., 1998

Ronald Reagan Turnpike
350-mile toll road in Florida, 1998

Ronald Reagan Suite
Century Plaza Hotel, Los Angeles, 1999

Ronald Reagan Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse
Santa Ana, 1999

Source: Mercury News research

RONALD WILSON REAGAN | 1911-2004

“President Reagan is still my president.”

ALAN KEYES, FORMER AMBASSADOR AND GOP PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, WHILE CAMPAIGNING, MAY 4, 1999

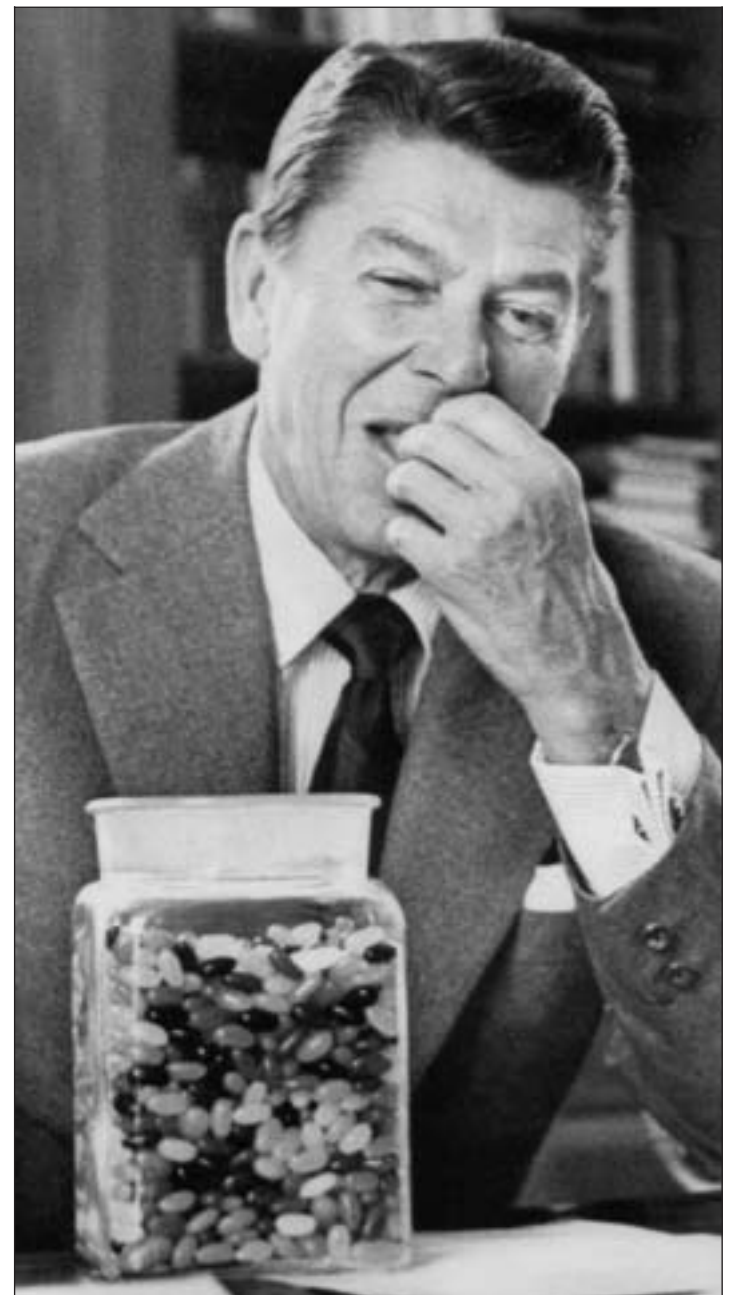
1981-89

THE PRESIDENT



RICK BOWMER — ASSOCIATED PRESS ARCHIVES

Coming home after leaving office in January 1989, the former president tries on a University of Southern California Trojan helmet at an airport rally in Los Angeles for him and Nancy Reagan. Reagan also holds a large replica of a personalized California license plate. He left the presidency to George Bush, his vice president.



ASSOCIATED PRESS ARCHIVES

“You can tell a lot about a fellow’s character by his way of eating jelly beans,” Reagan was quoted as saying. He always kept a jar within reach. The president loved Jelly Belly beans, whose headquarters are in Fairfield, and made the candies famous.



BOB GALBRAITH — ASSOCIATED PRESS ARCHIVES

During his presidency, Reagan repeatedly challenged Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev to agree to radical cuts in both powers’ nuclear arsenals, eventually succeeding. Here the two former presidents chat at the Reagan ranch in 1992.



WHITE HOUSE PHOTOGRAPH

Reagan enjoyed building fences and clearing brush at Rancho del Cielo, his ranch near Santa Barbara, as he does here in March 1982.



MICHAEL EVANS — WHITE HOUSE

Top advisers included, from left, Deputy Chief of Staff Michael Deaver, Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, Secretary of State George Shultz, Attorney General Edwin Meese, Treasury Secretary James Baker and Vice President George Bush.

RONALD WILSON REAGAN | 1911-2004

"If Hollywood considers Ronald Reagan a buffoon — or, worse yet, a Boy Scout — the Democrats don't. They wish they had someone like him." THE LATE JIM MURRAY, LOS ANGELES TIMES SPORTSWRITER WHO PROFILED REAGAN FOR ESQUIRE

THE PERFORMER

His films, speechmaking and TV spots served as the script for a transition into politics that was far from abrupt

PIECES OF PRESIDENTIAL RHETORIC FOUND THROUGHOUT CAREER AS AN ENTERTAINER

By David L. Beck
Mercury News

Just before Ronald Reagan was elected president in 1980, film critic David Thomson wrote, in his "Dictionary of Film," that his success "encourages the thought that a monotonous acting style does best in public life.

"Undoubtedly," Thomson added, "Reagan's career shows that he went into politics only when he was washed up as an actor."

But Reagan, the only president ever to play Las Vegas, was by no means an actor for 29 years and then a man who made speeches for the next 22. The two careers overlapped to a surprising degree. "I loved three things: drama, politics and sports," Reagan once wrote, "and I'm not sure they always come in that order."

Contrast Thomson's opinion, for example, with Jim Murray's. The Los Angeles Times sportswriter wrote a profile of Reagan for Esquire magazine in February 1966 — the eve of Reagan's first race for governor of California.

"If Hollywood considers Ronald Reagan a buffoon — or, worse yet, a Boy Scout — the Democrats don't," wrote Murray. "They wish they had someone like him."

But "he's not even a good actor!" Murray quoted one publicist as protesting.

"That, as it happens, is not true. Ronald Reagan was and is a very good actor, indeed." The potential governor was neither handsome, nor romantic, nor a muscleman nor a high-liver. "He had to be a good actor," wrote Murray.

Reagan himself, in his 1965 autobiography (written with Richard Hubler), admitted he was basically a B-picture actor who sometimes got to play the second lead in an A picture. His talent was for earnestness, and it was enhanced by a severe myopia that gave him a far-away look, since he hated to wear glasses.

He appeared in more than 70 films, including those he made as part of the First Motion Picture Unit of the Army during World War II, but few even among his ardent supporters could name more than a half-dozen of them — "Knute Rockne, All American," perhaps, and "Bedtime for Bonzo," "Santa Fe Trail," "The Hasty Heart" or "Cattle Queen of Montana."

His own favorite movie, and by consensus his best performance, was "Kings Row," a 1942 film in which he got third billing as a playboy who loses his legs after an accident. He spent weeks worrying about a single line, and as the time came to say it, began to panic — a reaction that turned out to be perfect. When the playboy awakens in the hospital, he looks down and cries: "Where's the rest of me?"

Reagan liked the line so much that he used it as the title and theme of that autobiography. If a man "is only an actor," he wrote, "I feel, he is much like I was in 'Kings Row,' only half a man."

"Kings Row" might have impelled him in the direction of a serious career, but it didn't. "If Reagan was capable of this sort of work, why is it that he was never again remotely as good?" asks one posting to a Web site for the movie.

The answer probably lies in World War II, and the changed conditions he encountered upon his return to civilian life. Increasingly, his time was spent not making movies but making speeches and going to meetings. "I became an easy mark for speechmaking on the rubber-chicken and glass-tinkling circuit," he wrote. "It fed my ego, since I had been so long away from the screen. I loved it."

He had been appointed to the board of the Screen Actors Guild as early as 1938 ("one of the vacancies happened to fit my classification: new, young contract player," he wrote) and by 1945, the guild and other Hollywood unions were involved in the kind of complicated jurisdictional and political unrest that was sweep-

ing the rest of the country. Whether or not communism was in the unions — in his book, Reagan says flatly that it was — it was in the air and in the papers.

In 1946, the Screen Actors Guild issued a statement opposing "any fascist or communist influence" in the movie industry. Five years later, when Reagan was its president, the guild's board adopted a statement decrying "the international Communist Party conspiracy," and two years after that, with Reagan still at its head, the guild banned communists from membership. He testified before the House Un-American Activities Committee.

"I owe it to that period that I managed to sort out a lot of items in my personal life," he wrote. "I little by little became disillusioned or perhaps, in my case, I should say awakened."

His acting career, though, was grinding to a halt.

"I think I became too identified with the serious side of Hollywood's off-screen life," he wrote. But he also made dreadful choices: "The Voice of the Turtle" instead of "The Treasure of Sierra Madre," for example, and making eyes at Shirley Temple in "That Hagen Girl," her first grown-up role.

The Vegas gig came in 1954, when his agents suggested a nightclub act as a way of making money. What would I do? he asked. "What do you do at those benefits?" they replied. Introduce the other acts, he said.

And that's what he did. He worked up a quartet called the Continentals, who sang and did comedy, that included a sketch for him. He opened with a self-deprecating monologue. It was, he recalled, "a wonderfully successful two weeks," but he did not care to repeat it.

By that time he was hosting "General Electric Theatre" on television. It was a half-hour weekly anthology series in which he occasionally appeared; the model for it was a similar show Robert Montgomery (Reagan's predecessor as Screen Actors Guild president, coincidentally) had hosted.

"The real extra, however . . . was MCA's idea to hang the package on some personal appearance tours," he wrote. And so for the next eight years he gave hundreds of speeches and shook hundreds of thousands of hands at GE plants and at trade shows. His message was: Beware of big government. Return to the old values.

It was basically the same speech he would deliver on national TV on election night 1964 when, in Jim Murray's phrase, "he came, not to praise, but to bury Goldwater" and launch his own stroll to the White House. "All the things Ronald Reagan is not as an actor," wrote Murray, "he is as a politician."

Students of Reagan's movies would have recognized the tone, if not all of the content, of "The Speech."

A Reaganite might well have said about him what he, in the character of George Gipp, said about Knute Rockne in "Knute Rockne, All American" (1940): "He's given us something they don't teach in schools. Something clean and strong inside. Not just courage, but a right way of living that none of us will ever forget."

As Cmdr. Casey Adams, the submarine captain in "Hellcats of the Navy" (1957), he lectured a subordinate on "the sometimes painful decisions required in an emergency."

"I think you're a man who is ruled by personal emotion," the captain scolds, "and you attribute that behavior to everyone around you. Until you overcome that, you'll be unfit for the responsibility of command."

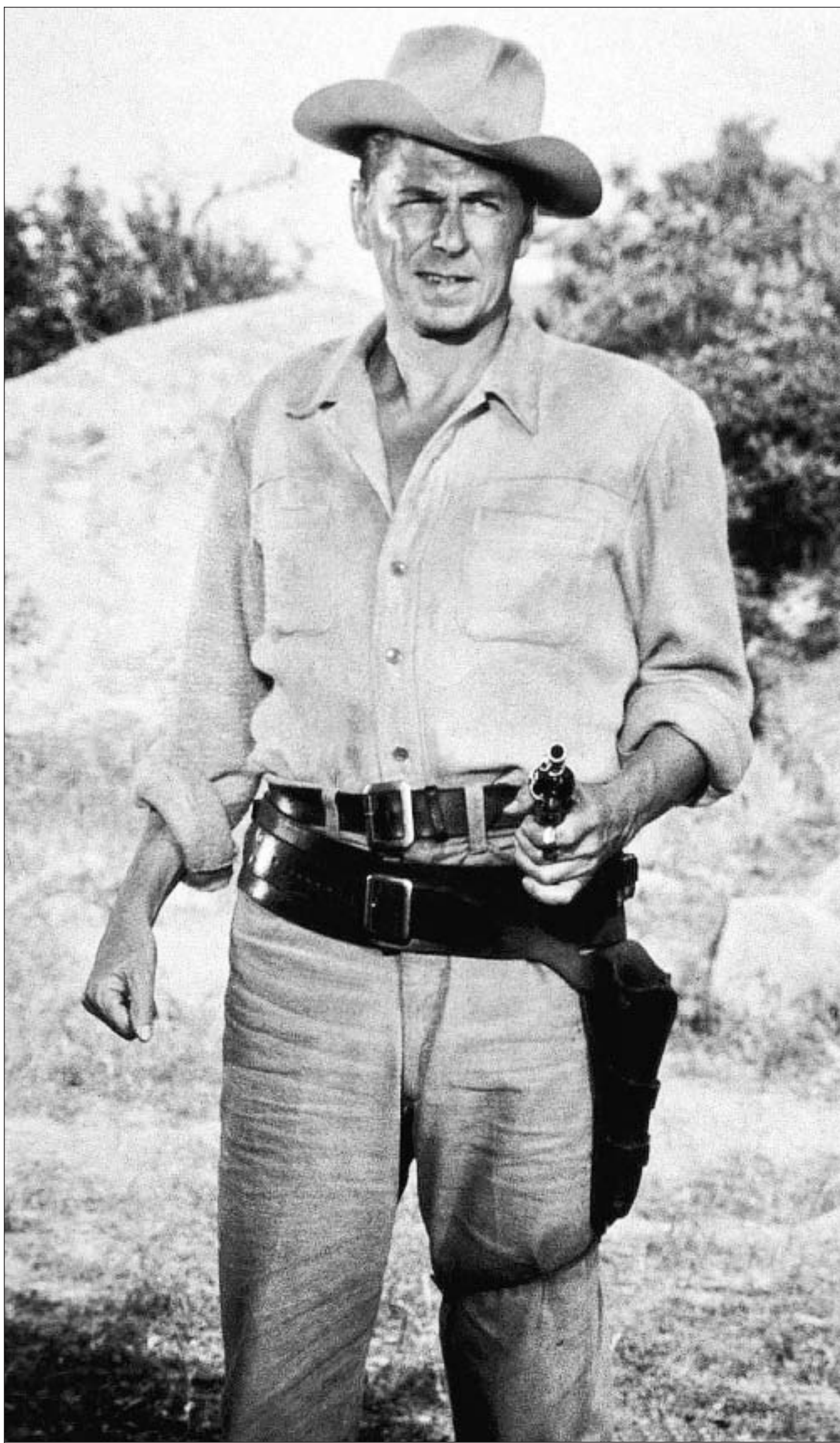
And like the Gipper on his deathbed, Reagan might have said: "I haven't got a care in the world . . . I'm not afraid."

Contact David L. Beck at
dbeck@mercurynews.com or
(831) 423-0960.



SPECIAL TO THE MERCURY NEWS

As a captain in the Army Air Forces, Ronald Reagan spent part of World War II making a handful of movies with a military unit.



SPECIAL TO THE MERCURY NEWS

In "Cattle Queen of Montana," Ronald Reagan wears a cowboy hat and wields a handgun. His cowboy image as president, while turning off some, appealed to many Americans who were yearning for a decisive leader.



ASSOCIATED PRESS ARCHIVES

Ronald Reagan testifies before the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1947. As chief of the actors guild, he tried to keep communists out of Hollywood.



Ronald Reagan leaves for the Army in 1942 with his first wife, Jane Wyman, and their daughter, Maureen. After World War II, Reagan became more involved with the off-screen portions of Hollywood, giving speeches and attending meetings.

ASSOCIATED PRESS ARCHIVES

RONALD WILSON REAGAN | 1911-2004

"It is not my intention to do away with government. It is rather to make it work— work with us, not over us and by our side, not ride on our back." RONALD REAGAN, FROM HIS INAUGURAL ADDRESS, JAN. 20, 1981



President Ronald Reagan, left, and his vice president, George Bush, acknowledge their supporters cheering on the floor of the 1984 Republican National Convention in Dallas.

RON EDMONDS — ASSOCIATED PRESS ARCHIVES

EDITORIAL

THE OPINION OF THE MERCURY NEWS

Ex-president restored confidence America lost

A remarkable American life has ended.

Ronald Reagan, child of poverty, movie star, governor of California, president, passed away Saturday.

In a life that spanned more than nine decades, essentially the 20th century, Ronald Reagan exemplified America — its opportunities, its optimism and its blind spots.

A president of strong convictions who shifted the political mainstream toward conservatism, he inspires to this day a range of opinions wider than for any other president since World War II.

Between the idolizers who would add him to Mount Rushmore and the detractors who would stick him in the corner with a dunce cap, the real-life Ronald Reagan can be hard to discern.

Undeniably, he was a popular president. Though no president wins the hearts of everyone, for many Americans, Reagan inspired an enthusiasm not felt since John F. Kennedy.

After presidencies that ended in assassination, the failure of Vietnam, moral disgrace, weakness and ineffectiveness, Reagan restored the confidence that America had lost.

Reagan was a president of strong convictions with a talent for setting clear goals and articulating his message memorably: "Are

you better off than you were four years ago?" or, standing at the Berlin Wall, "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall."

On his own terms, his presidency succeeded. He drove political discourse and public policy toward support for military strength, lower taxes, less regulation and away from the safety-net programs of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society.

In the eyes of his champions, he ended the Cold War by forcing the Soviet Union into a military spending contest it could not sustain, he revitalized the economy and restored American greatness. In the eyes of his detractors, he happened to be president when the Soviet Union collapsed of its own follies, he tripled the national debt and pandered to American chauvinism.

Whatever his intelligence — and there are persuasive accounts that his opponents greatly underestimated it — Reagan's executive style was to not to sweat the small stuff.

In doing so, he demonstrated both the power of clarity and focus and the danger of failing to master the details sufficiently. His inattention left him vulnerable to the ambitions of his subordinates, such as in the Iran-Contra arms-for-hostages scandal.

Reagan often governed less conservatively than he talked. He handily turned Pat Brown

out of the California governor's office in 1966, riding a backlash against permissiveness, especially at the state's universities, and against the growth of government.

But as governor, he signed what was then the largest tax increase in state history. He signed a bill legalizing abortion. On the environment, he ended the era of big dams and stopped a major road across the Sierra Nevada.

As president, Reagan saw the limits of government, but in doing so he undervalued the good that government can do. His presidency was an ongoing snub to the environment (in contrast to his governorship). His policies were of little assistance to the poor and disenfranchised. His "morning in America" optimism offered the false promise that America could have it all without hard work or sacrifice, and it overlooked the fact that too many Americans have very little.

His two terms left America with a debt that shapes the federal budget to this day.

The debate about whether Ronald Reagan was good for America will go on, because it is a debate over the role of government that dates back to the beginning of this country. And it will go on for the reasons every president would hope for: Reagan was effective. His presidency changed the country.

RONALD WILSON REAGAN | 1911-2004

"If Hollywood considers Ronald Reagan a buffoon – or, worse yet, a Boy Scout – the Democrats don't. They wish they had someone like him." **THE LATE JIM MURRAY, LOS ANGELES TIMES SPORTSWRITER WHO PROFILED REAGAN FOR ESQUIRE**

Moments in a life

From humble beginnings to the pinnacles of power, the former president became an enduring American icon

Formative years

Feb. 6, 1911: Ronald Wilson Reagan is born to John Edward and Nelle Wilson Reagan in Tampico, Ill., over the store where his father sold shoes.

1920-30: Reagan family settles in Dixon, Ill. Reagan graduates from North High School and enters Eureka College, where he serves as student body president.

1932: Reagan graduates from Eureka College with degrees in economics and sociology. His first job: weekend sportscaster for WOC, Davenport, Iowa.

1934: He transfers to NBC's WHO radio station in Des Moines, where he re-creates professional baseball and Big 10 football games by reading telegraph accounts.

Acting career

1937: He takes a screen test at Warner Bros. and lands a contract. He portrays a radio announcer in his first film, "Love is on the Air."

1939: He appears in "Dark Victory" and "Hell's Kitchen."

1940: Reagan, 28, marries actress Jane Wyman, 26. Reagan secures the part of George Gipp, the legendary Notre Dame running back in "Knut Rockne, All-American." This role earns him the nickname "The Gipper."

1941: Reagan plays the lead role of Drake McHugh in "Kings Row," considered his finest film. Daughter Maureen is born.

1942: A second lieutenant of cavalry during World War II, Reagan serves briefly at Fort Mason in San Francisco. Later, he works with the Army-Air Force First Motion Picture Unit as a narrator of preflight training films for bomber pilots. He serves until July 1945, rising to the rank of captain.

1945: He adopts a son, Michael.

1946: Elected president of the Screen Actors Guild, serving from 1947 to 1960.

1947: Testifies before the House Committee on Un-American Activities when they investigate alleged communist influence in Hollywood. Reagan also works with the FBI during the 1940s as an informant, providing names of actors he believes to be Communists.

1948: Campaigns for Harry Truman.

1949: Becomes chairman of the Motion Pictures Council. His divorce from Jane Wyman is finalized.

1951: Appears in "Bedtime for Bonzo" opposite a chimpanzee.

1952: Marries Nancy Davis on March 4. He joins Democrats for Eisenhower. Daughter, Patricia, is born.

1954: Hired by General Electric as host of the General Electric Theatre until 1962.

1958: Son, Ronald, is born.

Governing California

1960: Reagan campaigns for Republican presidential nominee Nixon, delivering 200 speeches.

1962: Changes his voter registration to Republican.

1964: Appears in his 53rd and final film, "The Killers," co-starring Angie Dickinson — the only movie in which he plays a villain.

1965: Autobiography titled "Where Is the Rest of Me?" is published. He becomes the host of the television series "Death Valley Days."

Nov. 8, 1966: Elected governor of California, beating Democratic incumbent Edmund G. (Pat) Brown Sr. by nearly 1 million votes.

Jan. 2, 1967: Sworn in as governor.

Jan. 12, 1967: Gets tough on state budget with an out-of-state travel freeze and asks each department for a 10 percent budget cut.

Jan. 20, 1967: Begins money-saving restrictions on state's health care system: immediate cuts in Medi-Cal; stiffer admission requirements to nursing and convalescent homes; asks physicians to postpone non-urgent surgeries.

February 1967: Asks state employees to work voluntarily on Lincoln's Birthday as part of his 10 percent budget-cutting drive.

May 15, 1967: Sends National Guard to Berkeley to contain a war protest that turns into a bloody riot. James Rector, 25, of San Jose dies from gunshot wounds. This is one of Reagan's many tough stands against war protesters on college campuses through 1970.

June 14, 1967: Signs Therapeutic Abortion Act, giving California a more liberal abortion law than most others in the nation.

1968: Running for the Republican presidential nomination, he receives 182 delegate votes, coming in third behind Nixon and Nelson Rockefeller.

Feb. 17, 1970: Declares "state of extreme emergency" in Santa Barbara after rioting and the burning of a bank near the University of California.

1970: Approves \$83 million in one-time rebate checks to be mailed to California taxpayers.

Nov. 3, 1970: Re-elected governor with 52 percent of the vote, defeating Democrat Jesse Unruh.

1973: Staunchly defends Nixon during the Watergate scandal.

Running for president

1975: After his governorship, Reagan returns to radio, writes a newspaper column and hits the lecture circuit. In November, he announces that he will challenge President Gerald Ford for the Republican presidential nomination.

1976: Comes within 60 votes of denying Ford the GOP nomination at the Republican convention.

Nov. 13, 1979: Announces another run for president.

1980: Wins Republican nomination with 1,939 votes, trouncing John B. Anderson, who received 37 votes, and George Bush, who received 13.

Nov. 4, 1980: Reagan defeats President Carter in a landslide, with 51 percent of the vote to Carter's 41 percent.

The White House

Jan. 20, 1981: Reagan is inaugurated as 40th president and promptly orders a federal hiring freeze.

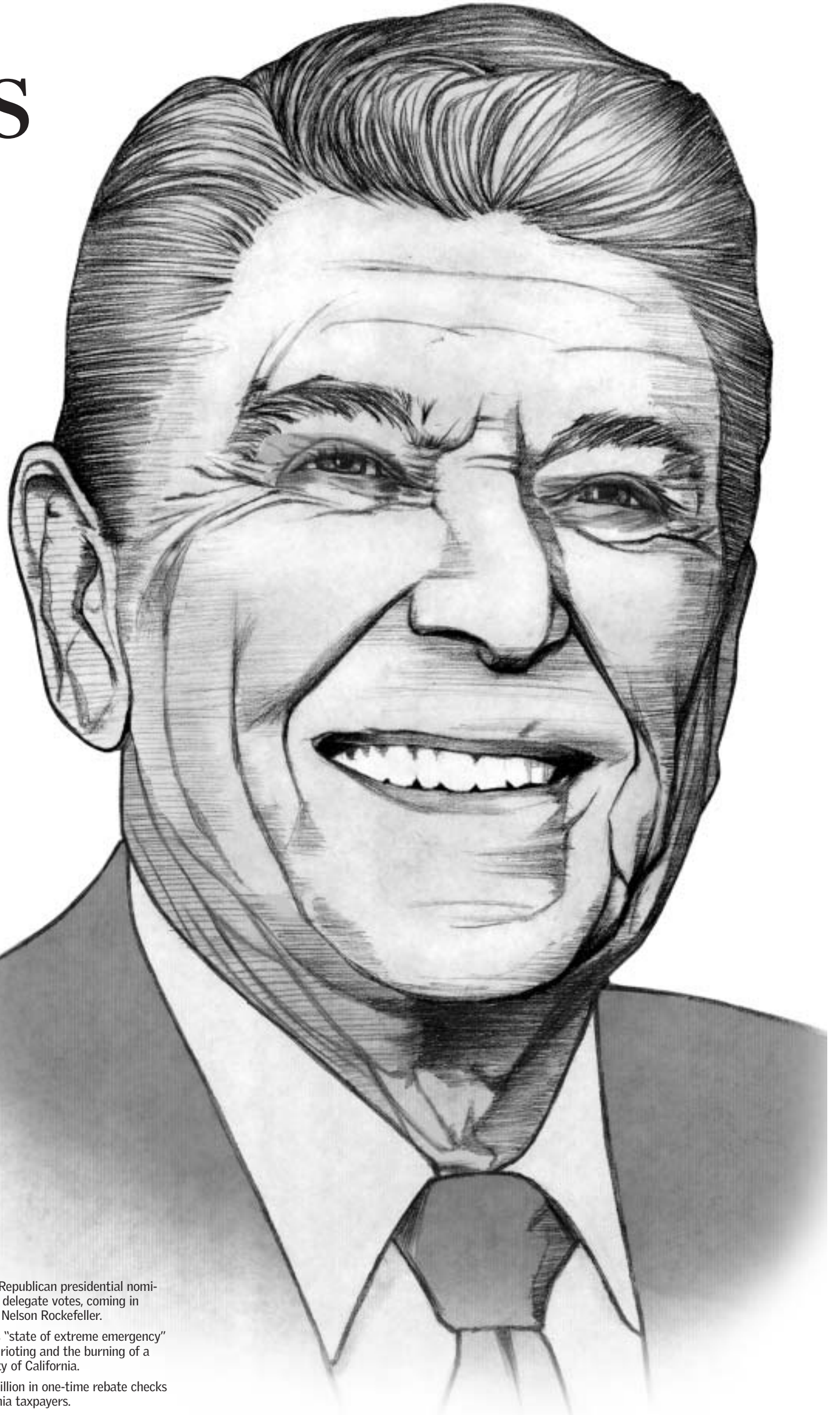
March 30, 1981: John W. Hinckley Jr. attempts to assassinate Reagan outside the Washington Hilton Hotel. One bullet hits the president, puncturing his lung. Another bullet severely injures press secretary James Brady.

July 7, 1981: Reagan nominates Judge Sandra Day O'Connor, 51, of Arizona as the first female justice on the U.S. Supreme Court.

Aug. 3, 1981: Most of America's air traffic controllers go on strike, and Reagan promptly fires them; 11,400 union members lose their jobs.

December 1981: Congress backs Reagan's three-year, 25 percent tax cut, massive military buildup and \$45 billion in social spending cuts.

March 8, 1983: Makes "evil empire" speech to National Association of Evangelicals, adding moral imperative to arms race.



PHIL LOUBERE — MERCURY NEWS

Oct. 23, 1983: Truck bombing of U.S. Marine headquarters in Beirut kills 241 servicemen.

Oct. 25, 1983: Orders invasion of Grenada after Prime Minister Maurice Bishop is killed by rival faction of his own Marxist party. Government topples days later.

His second term

Nov. 6, 1984: Wins re-election in a 49-state electoral landslide against former Vice President Walter Mondale — the largest presidential victory in history.

Nov. 19, 1985: Meets Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev in Geneva for their first summit.

Jan. 26, 1986: Space shuttle Challenger explodes.

April 14, 1986: Orders the bombing of Libya in retaliation for terrorist bombing of West Berlin discotheque that killed two U.S. soldiers.

May 26, 1986: On secret orders from Reagan, former national security adviser Robert McFarlane and Marine Lt. Col. Oliver L. North arrive in Tehran to negotiate with Iranian moderates about giving Iran arms in exchange for the release of U.S. hostages.

Oct. 12, 1986: Second Reagan-Gorbachev summit in Reykjavik, Iceland, explores deal to scrap all nuclear weapons but ends in impasse over Strategic Defense Initiative.

November 6, 1986: Secret administrative initiative to sell Iran arms for hostages is revealed. In late November, it becomes known that the administration diverted proceeds from the arms sales to fund the Nicaraguan Contras. Direct military aid to the Contras had been outlawed by Congress.

Nov. 13, 1986: Reagan tells reporters: "We did not — repeat, did not — trade weapons or anything else for hostages, nor will we."

Feb. 8, 1987: Ousted chief of staff Donald Regan reveals that Nancy rules the president's schedule according to calculations of San Francisco astrologer Joan Quigley.

March 4, 1987: Reagan says in televised speech: "A few months ago I told the American people I did not trade arms for hostages. My heart and my best intentions still tell me that is true, but the facts and the evidence tell me it is not."

Dec. 8, 1987: At third Reagan-Gorbachev summit, in Washington, they sign Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces Treaty, banning ground-based nuclear missiles with a range of 300 to 3,500 miles.

March 11, 1988: Former national security adviser McFarlane pleads guilty in federal court to four misdemeanor charges of deceiving Congress in 1985 and 1986 about plan to aid Contras.

March 17, 1988: North, called a "national hero" by Reagan, is indicted for his role in Iran-Contra.

The later years

Jan. 11, 1989: In farewell speech, Reagan warns of "an erosion of the American spirit." He leaves office the most popular president of the postwar era.

Aug. 17, 1992: Delivers a speech at the Republican Party convention aimed at energizing a demoralized party.

Jan. 13, 1993: Becomes the 301st recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Nov. 5, 1994: In handwritten note, Reagan reveals to the nation that he has Alzheimer's disease.

Feb. 6, 1996: Five hundred Reagan friends gather to celebrate his 85th birthday at Chasen's in Los Angeles. Reagan does not attend.

Feb. 6, 1998: On Reagan's 87th birthday, Clinton signs a bill changing the name of the Washington, D.C., airport to Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport.

Nov. 4, 2003: CBS pulls its heavily promoted television miniseries "The Reagans" from its schedule under intense political pressure, criticism from the Reagan family and the threat of an advertising boycott. The miniseries drew fire for historical inaccuracies, made-up dialogue and what critics called a demeaning deconstruction of the Reagan legacy by the Hollywood left. The miniseries later airs on Showtime.

June 5, 2004: Reagan dies at his compound in Bel-Air.



President Reagan leaves the Oval Office at the White House on Jan. 20, 1989.

DOUG MILLS — ASSOCIATED PRESS ARCHIVES

In closing, let me thank you, the American people,
for giving me the great honor of allowing me to serve
as your president. When the Lord calls me home,
whenever that day may be, I will leave with the greatest love
for this country of ours and eternal optimism for its future.
I now begin the journey that will lead me into the sunset of my life.
I know that for America there will always be a bright dawn ahead.
Thank you, my friends. May God always bless you.

**From Ronald Reagan's letter to America, Nov. 5, 1994.
At age 83, he announced that he had Alzheimer's disease.**

Ronald Reagan