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Last Updated: 12/30/2025

Vice President Cheney's Remarks at State Funeral Ceremony

Remarks by the Vice President at the State Funeral of Ronald W. Reagan
Washington, D.C.
U.S. Capitol Rotunda

7:55 P.M. EDT

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Mrs. Reagan, members of the President's family, colleagues, distinguished guests, members of the diplomatic corps, fellow citizens:

Knowing that this moment would come has not made it any easier to see the honor guard, and the flag draped before us, and to begin America's farewell to President Ronald Reagan. He said goodbye to us in a letter that showed his great courage and love for America. Yet for his friends and for his country, the parting comes only now. And in this national vigil of mourning, we show how much America loved this good man, and how greatly we will miss him.



A harsh winter morning in 1985 brought the inaugural ceremony inside to this Rotunda. And standing in this place for the 50th presidential inauguration, Ronald Reagan spoke of a nation that was "hopeful, big-hearted, idealistic, daring, decent, and fair." That was how he saw America, and that is how America came to know him. There was a kindness, simplicity, and goodness of character that marked all the years of his life.

When you mourn a man of 93, no one is left who remembers him as a child in his mother's arms. Ronald Wilson Reagan's life began in a time and place so different from our own, in a quiet town on the prairie, on the 6th of February, 1911. Nelle and Jack Reagan would live long enough to see the kind of man they had raised, but they could never know all that destiny had in store for the boy they called Dutch. And if they could witness this scene in 2004, their son taken to his rest with the full honors of the United States, they would be so proud of all he had done with the life they gave him, and the things they taught him.

President Reagan once said, "I learned from my father the value of hard work and ambition, and maybe a little something about telling a story." That was the Ronald Reagan who confidently set out on his own from Dixon, Illinois during the Great Depression, the man who would one day speak before cameras and crowds with such ease and self-command. "From my mother," said President Reagan, "I learned the value of prayer. My mother told me that everything in life happened for a purpose. She said all things were part of God's plan, even the most disheartening setbacks, and in the end, everything worked out for the best." This was the Ronald Reagan who had faith, not just in his own gifts and his own future, but in the possibilities of every life. The cheerful spirit that carried him forward was more than a disposition; it was the optimism of a faithful soul, who trusted in God's purposes, and knew those purposes to be right and true.

He once said, "There's no question I am an idealist, which is another way of saying I am an American." We usually associate that quality with youth, and yet one of the most idealistic men ever to become president



was also the oldest. He excelled in professions that have left many others jaded and self-satisfied, and yet somehow remained untouched by the worst influences of fame or power. If Ronald Reagan ever uttered a cynical, or cruel, or selfish word, the moment went unrecorded. Those who knew him in his youth, and those who knew him a lifetime later, all remember his largeness of spirit, his gentle instincts, and a quiet rectitude that drew others to him.

Seen now, at a distance, his strengths as a man and as a leader are only more impressive. It's the nature of the city of Washington that men and women arrive, leave their mark, and go their way. Some figures who seemed quite large and important in their day are sometimes forgotten, or remembered with ambivalence. Yet nearly a generation after the often impassioned debates of the Reagan years, what lingers from that time is almost all good. And this is because of the calm and kind man who stood at the center of events.

We think back with appreciation for the decency of our 40th president, and respect for all that he achieved. After so much turmoil in the '60s and '70s, our nation had begun to lose confidence, and some were heard to say that the presidency might even be too big for one man. That phrase did not survive the 1980s. For decades, America had waged a Cold War, and few believed it could possibly end in our own lifetimes. The President was one of those few. And it was the vision and will of Ronald Reagan that gave hope to the oppressed, shamed the oppressors, and ended an evil empire. More than any other influence, the Cold War was ended by the perseverance and courage of one man who answered falsehood with truth, and overcame evil with good.

Ronald Reagan was more than an historic figure. He was a providential man, who came along just when our nation and the world most needed him. And believing as he did that there is a plan at work in each life, he accepted not only the great duties that came to him, but also the great trials that came near the end. When he learned of his illness, his first thoughts were of Nancy. And who else but Ronald Reagan could face his own decline and death with a final message of hope to his country, telling us that for America there is always a bright dawn ahead. Fellow Americans, here lies a graceful and a gallant man.

Nancy, none of us can take away the sadness you are feeling. I hope it is a comfort to know how much he means to us, and how much you mean to us as well. We honor your grace, your own courage, and above all, the great love that you gave to your husband. When these days of ceremony are completed, the nation returns him to you for the final journey to the West. And when he is laid to rest under the Pacific sky, we will be thinking of you, as we commend to Almighty the soul of His faithful servant, Ronald Wilson Reagan.

END 8:00 P.M. EDT



Speaker's Remarks at the State Funeral Of the late President Ronald Wilson Reagan

June 8 , 2004

(Washington, D.C.) The Speaker of the House, J. Dennis Hastert (R-IL) made the following remarks at the State Funeral of the late President Ronald Wilson Reagan tonight in the Capitol Rotunda:

"Mrs. Reagan, Mr. Vice President, Members of Congress, Distinguished Guests:

Ronald Reagan's long journey has finally drawn to a close.

"It is altogether fitting and proper that he has returned to this Capitol Rotunda, like another great son of Illinois, Abraham Lincoln, so the nation can say, good-bye.

"This Capitol Building is, for many, the greatest symbol of democracy and freedom in the world.

"It brings to mind the 'shining city on a hill' of which President Reagan so often spoke. It is the right place to honor a man who so faithfully defended our freedom, and so successfully helped extend the blessings of liberty to millions around the world.

"Mrs. Reagan, thank you for sharing your husband with us—for your steadfast love and for your great faith. We pray for you and for your family in this time of great mourning.

"But as we mourn, we must also celebrate the life and the vision of one of America's greatest Presidents.

"His story and values are quintessentially American.

"Born in Tampico, Illinois, and then raised in Dixon, Illinois, he moved west to follow his dreams. He brought with him a Midwestern optimism, and he blended it with a western 'can do' spirit.

"In 1980, the year of the 'Reagan Revolution,' his vision of hope, growth, and opportunity was exactly what the American people needed and wanted. His message touched a fundamental chord that is deeply embedded in the American experience.

"President Reagan dared to dream that America had a special mission. He believed in the essential goodness of the American people—and that we had a special duty to promote peace and freedom for the rest of the world.

"Against the advice of the timid, he sent a chilling message to authoritarian governments everywhere, that the civilized world would not rest—until freedom reigned—in every corner of the globe.

"While others worried, President Reagan persevered. When others weakened, President Reagan stood tall. When others stepped back, President Reagan stepped forward. And he did it all with great humility, with great charm, and with great humor.

"Tonight, we will open these doors and let the men and women who Ronald Reagan served so faithfully, file past and say good-bye to a man who meant so much to so many.

"It is their being here that I think would mean more to him than any words we say.

"Because it was from America's great and good people that Ronald Reagan drew his strength.

"We will tell our grandchildren about this night when we gathered to honor the man from Illinois who became the son of California and then the son of all America.

"And our grandchildren will tell their grandchildren—and President Reagan's spirit and eternal faith in America will carry on.

"Ronald Reagan helped make our country and this world a better place to live. But he always believed that our best days were ahead of us, not behind us.

"I can still hear him say, with that twinkle in his eye, 'You ain't seen nothing yet!'

"President Reagan once said, 'We make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give.'

"Twenty years ago, President Reagan stood on the beaches of Normandy, to honor those who made a life, by what they gave.

"Recalling the men who scaled the cliffs and crossed the beaches in a merciless hail of bullets, he asked, who were these men—these ordinary men doing extraordinary things?

"His answer was simple and direct: They were Americans.

"So I can think of no higher tribute or honor or title to confer upon Ronald Reagan than to simply say: He was an American.

"Godspeed, Mr. President.

"God bless you, and God bless the United States of America."

For Immediate Release
Contact: Courtney Schikora
June 8, 2004 (202) 224-1028

**President Pro Tempore Senator Ted Stevens Offers Eulogy
In Honor Of President Ronald Reagan**

Today, Senator Ted Stevens, President Pro Tempore of the United States Senate, joined Vice President Dick Cheney and Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert in receiving the remains of President Ronald Wilson Reagan to the United States Capitol Rotunda, where he will lie in state until Friday morning.

During the ceremony Senator Stevens offered this eulogy of our nation's 40th President.

MRS. REAGAN, PATTI, RON, MICHAEL, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, MEMBERS OF THE REAGAN FAMILY, AND FRIENDS OF RONALD REAGAN IN AMERICA AND THROUGHOUT THE WORLD:

TONIGHT, PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN HAS RETURNED TO THE PEOPLE'S HOUSE TO BE HONORED BY MILLIONS OF AMERICANS WHO LOVED HIM.

SINCE 1824, UNDER THIS ROTUNDA, OUR NATION HAS PAID FINAL TRIBUTE TO MANY DEDICATED PUBLIC SERVANTS. PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN WAS THE FIRST PRESIDENT TO LIE IN STATE UNDER THIS CAPITOL DOME. IN THE COMING DAYS, THOUSANDS WILL COME TO THESE HALLOWED HALLS TO SAY GOOD-BYE TO ANOTHER SON OF ILLINOIS WHO, LIKE LINCOLN, APPEALED TO OUR BEST HOPES, NOT OUR WORST FEARS.

IN THE LIFE OF ANY NATION, FEW MEN FOREVER ALTER THE COURSE OF HISTORY. RONALD REAGAN WAS ONE OF THOSE MEN. HE ROSE FROM A YOUNG BOY WHO DIDN'T HAVE MUCH TO A MAN WHO HAD IT ALL, INCLUDING THE LOVE OF A FAITHFUL PARTNER AND FRIEND HE FOUND IN HIS WIFE NANCY.

THE TRUE MEASURE OF ANY MAN IS WHAT HE DOES WITH THE OPPORTUNITIES LIFE OFFERS. BY THAT STANDARD, RONALD REAGAN WAS ONE OF AMERICA'S GREATEST. HE FIRST PROVED THAT AS GOVERNOR OF CALIFORNIA AND LATER AS THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

WHEN RONALD REAGAN WAS SWORN IN AS OUR 40TH PRESIDENT, THIS NATION WAS GRIPPED BY A POWERFUL MALAISE, INFLATION AND UNEMPLOYMENT WERE SOARING, AND THE SOVIET UNION WAS WINNING THE COLD WAR.

BY THE TIME PRESIDENT REAGAN LEFT OFFICE, HE HAD REVERSED THE TREND OF EVER-INCREASING GOVERNMENT CONTROL OVER OUR LIVES, RESTORED OUR DEFENSE CAPABILITIES, GUIDED US THROUGH THE WORST ECONOMIC DOWNTURN SINCE THE GREAT DEPRESSION, AND SET IN MOTION POLICIES WHICH ULTIMATELY LED TO THE COLLAPSE OF THE "EVIL EMPIRE."

HIS INTEGRITY, VISION AND COMMITMENT WERE RESPECTED BY ALL. BUT HISTORY'S FINAL JUDGMENT, I BELIEVE, WILL REMEMBER MOST HIS ABILITY TO INSPIRE US.

*PRESIDENT REAGAN PUT IT BEST WHEN HE SAID:
"THE GREATEST LEADER IS NOT*

NECESSARILY THE ONE WHO DOES THE GREATEST THINGS. HE IS THE ONE THAT GETS [THE] PEOPLE TO DO THE GREATEST THINGS."

THIS PRESIDENT INSPIRED AMERICANS BY REACHING OUT FAR BEYOND WHAT HE COULD ATTAIN. LIKE A GOOD COACH, HE UNDERSTOOD THE VALUE OF A GOAL ISN'T ALWAYS IN ACHIEVING IT; SOMETIMES IT IS ENOUGH TO SIMPLY LOOK OUT INTO THE FUTURE AND REMIND PEOPLE WHAT IS POSSIBLE. AND, OFTEN HE ACHIEVED THE IMPOSSIBLE.

HE REMINDED US THAT "GOVERNMENT IS NOT THE SOLUTION." THE SOLUTION LIES IN EACH OF US. TRUE AMERICAN HEROES ARE ORDINARY PEOPLE WHO LIVE THEIR LIVES WITH EXTRAORDINARY CHARACTER AND STRENGTH.

PRESIDENT REAGAN SHOWED US FREEDOM WAS NOT JUST A SLOGAN; HE ACTUALLY BROUGHT FREEDOM TO HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE AROUND THIS GLOBE BY OPPOSING OPPRESSIVE REGIMES. THOSE OF US FROM THE WORLD WAR II GENERATION LOOKED UP TO HIM FOR HIS MORAL COURAGE; IN HIM WE SAW THE LEADERSHIP OF GREAT MEN LIKE EISENHOWER WHO LED THE WAY AND MOVED US TO FOLLOW.

ON A WINTER DAY IN 1981, RONALD REAGAN STOOD ON THE STEPS THAT LIE JUST BEYOND THESE DOORS TO DELIVER HIS FIRST INAUGURAL ADDRESS. HE SPOKE OF A JOURNAL WRITTEN BY A YOUNG AMERICAN WHO WENT TO FRANCE IN 1917 AND DIED FOR THE CAUSE OF FREEDOM. FROM THAT JOURNAL HE READ THESE WORDS:

"I WILL WORK, I WILL SAVE, I WILL
SACRIFICE, I WILL ENDURE, I WILL
FIGHT CHEERFULLY AND DO MY UTMOST, AS IF THE ISSUE OF THE WHOLE STRUGGLE
DEPENDS ON ME ALONE."

THROUGHOUT HIS LIFE, RONALD REAGAN BORE OUR BURDENS AS IF THE OUTCOME DID DEPEND ON HIM ALONE. WE WILL ALL REMEMBER HIM AS AN UNPARALLELED LEADER AND AN EXCEPTIONAL MAN WHO LIFTED OUR NATION AND SET THE WORLD ON A NEW PATH.

PRESIDENT REAGAN ACHIEVED GREATNESS IN HIS LIFE; SOME MIGHT EVEN ARGUE HE TRANSCENDED IT. HE COULD NOT HAVE ACCOMPLISHED THIS WITHOUT NANCY. NANCY IS ONE OF THE FINEST FIRST LADIES THESE UNITED STATES HAVE EVER KNOWN. AND THE LOVE RONALD AND NANCY REAGAN SHARED TOUCHED THE HEARTS OF PEOPLE EVERYWHERE.

IN 1989, PRESIDENT REAGAN DELIVERED HIS FAREWELL ADDRESS FROM THE OVAL OFFICE. IN THAT SPEECH, THE PRESIDENT SPOKE OF "THE SHINING CITY UPON A HILL" THAT, "AFTER 200 YEARS, TWO CENTURIES ...STILL STANDS STRONG AND TRUE ON THE GRANITE RIDGE."

NOW, IT IS OUR TURN TO THANK RONALD REAGAN FOR MAKING US BELIEVE IN THAT SHINING CITY. AS WE SAY FAREWELL, HIS LAST WORDS AS PRESIDENT ECHO ACROSS THIS GREAT NATION. IF WE LISTEN, WE WILL HEAR HIM WHISPER THE HUMBLE WORDS HE USED TO SUM UP HIS REVOLUTION:

"ALL IN ALL, NOT BAD, NOT BAD AT ALL."

The Text of Baroness Margaret Thatcher's Eulogy of Former President Reagan

The Associated Press
Friday, June 11, 2004; 11:55 AM

A text of Baroness Margaret Thatcher's eulogy at the funeral of former President Ronald Ronald:

We have lost a great president, a great American, and a great man. And I have lost a dear friend.

In his lifetime Ronald Reagan was such a cheerful and invigorating presence that it was easy to forget what daunting historic tasks he set himself. He sought to mend America's wounded spirit, to restore the strength of the free world, and to free the slaves of communism. These were causes hard to accomplish and heavy with risk.

Yet they were pursued with almost a lightness of spirit. For Ronald Reagan also embodied another great cause - what Arnold Bennett once called 'the great cause of cheering us all up'. His politics had a freshness and optimism that won converts from every class and every nation - and ultimately from the very heart of the evil empire.

Yet his humour often had a purpose beyond humour. In the terrible hours after the attempt on his life, his easy jokes gave reassurance to an anxious world. They were evidence that in the aftermath of terror and in the midst of hysteria, one great heart at least remained sane and jocular. They were truly grace under pressure.

And perhaps they signified grace of a deeper kind. Ronnie himself certainly believed that he had been given back his life for a purpose. As he told a priest after his recovery 'Whatever time I've got left now belongs to the Big Fella Upstairs'.

And surely it is hard to deny that Ronald Reagan's life was providential, when we look at what he achieved in the eight years that followed.

Others prophesied the decline of the West; he inspired America and its allies with renewed faith in their mission of freedom.

Others saw only limits to growth; he transformed a stagnant economy into an engine of opportunity.

Others hoped, at best, for an uneasy cohabitation with the Soviet Union; he won the Cold War - not only without firing a shot, but also by inviting enemies out of their fortress and turning them into friends.

I cannot imagine how any diplomat, or any dramatist, could improve on his words to Mikhail Gorbachev at the Geneva summit: 'Let me tell you why it is we distrust you.' Those words are candid and tough and they cannot have been easy to hear. But they are

also a clear invitation to a new beginning and a new relationship that would be rooted in trust.

We live today in the world that Ronald Reagan began to reshape with those words. It is a very different world with different challenges and new dangers. All in all, however, it is one of greater freedom and prosperity, one more hopeful than the world he inherited on becoming president.

As Prime Minister, I worked closely with Ronald Reagan for eight of the most important years of all our lives. We talked regularly both before and after his presidency. And I have had time and cause to reflect on what made him a great president.

Ronald Reagan knew his own mind. He had firm principles - and, I believe, right ones. He expounded them clearly, he acted upon them decisively.

When the world threw problems at the White House, he was not baffled, or disorientated, or overwhelmed. He knew almost instinctively what to do.

When his aides were preparing option papers for his decision, they were able to cut out entire rafts of proposals that they knew 'the Old Man' would never wear.

When his allies came under Soviet or domestic pressure, they could look confidently to Washington for firm leadership.

And when his enemies tested American resolve, they soon discovered that his resolve was firm and unyielding.

Yet his ideas, though clear, were never simplistic. He saw the many sides of truth.

Yes, he warned that the Soviet Union had an insatiable drive for military power and territorial expansion; but he also sensed it was being eaten away by systemic failures impossible to reform.

Yes, he did not shrink from denouncing Moscow's 'evil empire'. But he realised that a man of goodwill might nonetheless emerge from within its dark corridors.

So the President resisted Soviet expansion and pressed down on Soviet weakness at every point until the day came when communism began to collapse beneath the combined weight of these pressures and its own failures. And when a man of goodwill did emerge from the ruins, President Reagan stepped forward to shake his hand and to offer sincere cooperation.

Nothing was more typical of Ronald Reagan than that large-hearted magnanimity - and nothing was more American.

Therein lies perhaps the final explanation of his achievements. Ronald Reagan carried the American people with him in his great endeavours because there was perfect sympathy between them. He and they loved America and what it stands for - freedom and opportunity for ordinary people.

As an actor in Hollywood's golden age, he helped to make the American dream live for millions all over the globe. His own life was a fulfilment of that dream. He never succumbed to the embarrassment some people feel about an honest expression of love of country.

He was able to say 'God Bless America' with equal fervour in public and in private. And so he was able to call confidently upon his fellow-countrymen to make sacrifices for America - and to make sacrifices for those who looked to America for hope and rescue.

With the lever of American patriotism, he lifted up the world. And so today the world - in Prague, in Budapest, in Warsaw, in Sofia, in Bucharest, in Kiev and in Moscow itself - the world mourns the passing of the Great Liberator and echoes his prayer "God Bless America".

Ronald Reagan's life was rich not only in public achievement, but also in private happiness. Indeed, his public achievements were rooted in his private happiness. The great turning point of his life was his meeting and marriage with Nancy.

On that we have the plain testimony of a loving and grateful husband: 'Nancy came along and saved my soul'. We share her grief today. But we also share her pride - and the grief and pride of Ronnie's children.

For the final years of his life, Ronnie's mind was clouded by illness. That cloud has now lifted. He is himself again - more himself than at any time on this earth. For we may be sure that the Big Fella Upstairs never forgets those who remember Him. And as the last journey of this faithful pilgrim took him beyond the sunset, and as heaven's morning broke, I like to think - in the words of Bunyan - that 'all the trumpets sounded on the other side'.

We here still move in twilight. But we have one beacon to guide us that Ronald Reagan never had. We have his example. Let us give thanks today for a life that achieved so much for all of God's children."

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Transcript: Reagan's Children Deliver Remarks at Service

FDCH E-Media

Friday, June 11, 2004; 11:55 PM

Text of remarks made by Ronald Reagan's children at a private service in Simi Valley, Calif.

MICHAEL REAGAN: Good evening. I'm Mike Reagan. You knew my father as governor, as president. But I knew him as dad. I want to tell you a little bit about my dad. A little bit about Cameron and Ashley's grandfather because not a whole lot is ever spoken about that side of Ronald Reagan. Ronald Reagan adopted me into his family 1945. I was a chosen one. I was the lucky one. And all of his years, he never mentioned that I was adopted either behind my back or in front of me. I was his son, Michael Edward Reagan.

When his families grew to be two families, he didn't walk away from the one to go to the other. But he became a father to both. To Patti and then Ronnie, but always to Maureen, my sister, and myself. We looked forward to those Saturday mornings when he would pick us up, sitting on the curve on Beverly Glenn, as his car would turn the corner from Sunset Boulevard and we would get in and ride to his ranch and play games and he would always make sure it ended up a tie.

We would swim and we would ride horses or we'd just watch him cut firewood. We would be in awe of our father. As years went by and I became older and found a woman I would marry, Colleen, he sent me a letter about marriage and how important it was to be faithful to the woman you love with a P.S. -- you'll never get in trouble if you say I love you at least once a day, and I'm sure he told Nancy every day I love you as I tell Colleen.

He also sent letters to his grandchildren. He wasn't able to be the grandfather that many of you are able to be because of the job that he had. And so he would write letters. He sent one letter to Cameron, said, Cameron, some guy got \$10,000 for my signature. Maybe this letter will help you pay for your college education. He signed it, Grandpa. P.S., your grandpa's is the 40th president of the United States, Ronald Reagan. He just signed his sign. Those are the kinds of things my father did.

At the early onset of Alzheimer's Disease my father and I would tell each other we loved each other and we would give each other a hug. As the years went by and he could no longer verbalize my name, he recognized me as the man who hugged him. So when I would walk into the house, he would be there in his chair opening up his arms for that hug, hello, and the hug good-bye. It was a blessing truly brought on by God.

We had wonderful blessings of that nature. Wonderful, wonderful blessings that my father gave to me each and every day of my life. I was so proud to have the Reagan name and to be Ronald Reagan's son. What a great honor. He gave me a lot of gifts as a child. Gave me a horse. Gave me a car. Gave me a lot of things. But there's a gift he gave me

that I think is wonderful for every father to give every son. Last Saturday, when my father opened his eyes for the last time, and visualized Nancy and gave her such a wonderful, wonderful gift.

When he closed his eyes, that's when I realized the gift that he gave to me, the gift that he was going to be with his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. He had, back in 1988 on a flight from Washington, D.C. to Point Mugu, told me about his love of God, his love of Christ as his Savior. I didn't know then what it all meant. But I certainly, certainly know now. I can't think of a better gift for a father to give a son. And I hope to honor my father by giving my son Cameron and my daughter Ashley that very same gift he gave to me. Knowing where he is this very moment, this very day, that he is in Heaven, and I can only promise my father this. Dad, when I go, I will go to Heaven, too. And you and I and my sister Maureen that went before us, we will dance with the heavenly host of angels before the presence of God. We will do it melanoma and Alzheimer's free. Thank you for letting me share my father, Ronald Wilson Reagan.

PATTI DAVIS: Many years ago, my father decided to write down his reflections about death, specifically his own, and how he would want people to feel about it. He chose to write down the first verse of an Alfred Lord Tennyson poem Crossing The Bar and then he decided to add a couple lines of his own. I don't think Tennyson will mind. In fact, they've probably already discussed it by now.

Tennyson wrote, sunset and evening star and one clear call for me. And may thereby no moaning of the bar when I put out to sea. My father added, we have God's promise that I have gone on to a better world where there is no pain or sorrow. Bring comfort to those who may mourn my going.

My father never feared death, he never saw it as an ending. When I was a child, he took me out into a field at our ranch after one of the Malibu fires had swept through. I was very small on the field, looked huge and lifeless, but he bent down and showed me how tiny new green shoots were peeking up out of the ashes just weeks after the fire had come through. You see, he said, new life always comes out of death. It looks like nothing could ever grow in this field again, but things do.

He was the one who generously offered funeral services for my goldfish on the morning of its demise. We went out into the garden and we dug a tiny grave with a teaspoon and he took two twigs and lashed them together with twine and formed a cross as a marker for the grave. And then he gave a beautiful eulogy. He told me that my fish was swimming in the clear blue waters in heaven and he would never tire and he would never get hungry and he would never be in any danger and he could swim as far and wide as he wanted and he never had to stop, because the river went on forever. He was free.

When we went back inside and I looked at my remaining goldfish in their aquarium with their pink plastic castle and their colored rocks, I suggested that perhaps we should kill the others so they could also go to that clear blue river and be free. He then took more time out of his morning, I'm sure he actually did have other things to do that day, and patiently explained to me that in God's time, the other fish would go there, as well. In

God's time, we would all be taken home. And even though it sometimes seemed a mystery, we were just asked to trust that God's time was right and wise.

I don't know why Alzheimer's was allowed to steal so much of my father -- sorry -- Before releasing him into the arms of death, but I know that at his last moment, when he opened his eyes, eyes that had not opened for many, many days and looked at my mother, he showed us that neither disease nor death can conquer love.

He may have in his lifetime come across a small book called Peace of Mind by Joshua Loth Lieberman. If he did, I think he would have been struck by these lines, then for each one of us, the moment comes when the great nurse, death, takes man, the child, by the hand and quietly says, it's time to go home, night is coming. It is your bedtime child of Earth.

RON REAGAN JR.: He is home now. He is free. In his final letter to the American people, dad wrote, I now begin the journey that will lead me into the sunset of my life. This evening, he has arrived.

History will record his worth as a leader. We here have long since measured his worth as a man. Honest, compassionate, graceful, brave. He was the most plainly decent man you could ever hope to meet.

He used to say, a gentleman always does the kind thing. And he was a gentleman in the truest sense of the word. A gentle man.

Big as he was, he never tried to make anyone feel small. Powerful as he became, he never took advantage of those who were weaker. Strength, he believed, was never more admirable than when it was applied with restraint. Shopkeeper, doorman, king or queen, it made no difference, dad treated everyone with the same unfailing courtesy. Acknowledging the innate dignity in us all.

The idea that all people are created equal was more than mere words on a page, it was how he lived his life. And he lived a good, long life. The kind of life good men lead. But I guess I'm just telling you things you already know.

Here's something you may not know, a little Ronald Reagan trivia for you, his entire life, dad had an inordinate fondness for ear lobes. Even as a boy, back in Dixon, Illinois hanging out on a street corner with his friends, they knew that if they were standing next to Dutch, sooner or later, he was going to reach over and grab ahold of their lobe, give it a workout there. Sitting on his lap watching TV as a kid, same story, he would have a hold of my ear lobe. I'm surprised I have any lobes left after all of that.

And you didn't have to be a kid to enjoy that sort of treatment. Serving in the Screen Actors Guild with his great friend William Holden, the actor, best man at his wedding, Bill got used to it. They would be there at the meetings, and Dad would have ahold of his ear lobe. There they'd be, some tense labor negotiation, two big Hollywood movie stars, hand in ear lobe.

He was, as you know, a famously optimistic man. Sometimes such optimism leads you to see the world as you wish it were as opposed to how it really is. At a certain point in his presidency, dad decided he was going to revive the thumbs up gesture. So he went all over the country, of course, giving everybody the thumbs up.

(UNINTELLIGIBLE) and I found ourselves in the presidential limousine one day returning from some big event. My mother was there and dad was of course, thumbs upping the crowd along the way, and suddenly, looming in the window on his side of the car was this snarling face. This fellow was reviving an entirely different hand gesture. And hoisted an entirely different digit in our direction. Dad saw this and without missing a beat turned to us and said, you see? I think it's catching on.

Dad was also a deeply, unabashedly religious man. But he never made the fatal mistake of so many politicians wearing his faith on his sleeve to gain political advantage. True, after he was shot and nearly killed early in his presidency, he came to believe that God had spared him in order that he might do good. But he accepted that as a responsibility, not a mandate. And there is a profound difference.

Humble as he was, he never would have assumed a free pass to heaven. But in his heart of hearts, I suspect he felt he would be welcome there. And so he is home. He is free.

Those of us who knew him well will have no trouble imagining his paradise. Golden fields will spread beneath a blue dome of a western sky. Live oaks will shadow the rolling hillsides. And someplace, flowing from years long past, a river will wind towards the sea. Across those fields, he will ride a gray mare he calls Nancy D. They will sail over jumps he has built with his own hands. He will at the river carry him over the shining stones. He will rest in the shade of the trees.

Our cares are no longer his. We meet him now only in memory. But we will join him soon enough. All of us. When we are home, when we are free.

(APPLAUSE)

END

President Bush's Eulogy at Funeral Service for President Reagan

Remarks by the President in Eulogy at National Funeral Service for Former President Ronald Wilson Reagan
The National Cathedral
Washington, D.C.

12:09 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Mrs. Reagan, Patti, Michael, and Ron; members of the Reagan family; distinguished guests, including our Presidents and First Ladies; Reverend Danforth; fellow citizens:

We lost Ronald Reagan only days ago, but we have missed him for a long time. We have missed his kindly presence, that reassuring voice, and the happy ending we had wished for him. It has been ten years since he said his own farewell; yet it is still very sad and hard to let him go. Ronald Reagan belongs to the ages now, but we preferred it when he belonged to us.

In a life of good fortune, he valued above all the gracious gift of his wife, Nancy. During his career, Ronald Reagan passed through a thousand crowded places; but there was only one person, he said, who could make him lonely by just leaving the room.



America honors you, Nancy, for the loyalty and love you gave this man on a wonderful journey, and to that journey's end. Today, our whole nation grieves with you and your family.

When the sun sets tonight off the coast of California, and we lay to rest our 40th President, a great American story will close. The second son of Nell and Jack Reagan first knew the world as a place of open plains, quiet streets, gas-lit rooms, and carriages drawn by horse. If you could go back to the Dixon, Illinois of 1922, you'd find a boy of 11 reading adventure stories at the public library, or running with his brother, Neil, along Rock River, and coming home to a little house on Hennepin Avenue. That town was the kind of place you remember where you prayed side by side with your neighbors, and if things were going wrong for them, you prayed for them, and knew they'd pray for you if things went wrong for you.

The Reagan family would see its share of hardship, struggle and uncertainty. And out of that circumstance came a young man of steadiness, calm, and a cheerful confidence that life would bring good things. The qualities all of us have seen in Ronald Reagan were first spotted 70 and 80 years ago. As a lifeguard in Lowell Park, he was the protector keeping an eye out for trouble. As a sports announcer on the radio, he was the friendly voice that made you see the game as he did. As an actor, he was the handsome, all-American, good guy, which, in his case, required knowing his lines -- and being himself.

Along the way, certain convictions were formed and fixed in the man. Ronald Reagan believed that everything happened for a reason, and that we should strive to know and do the will of God. He believed that the gentleman always does the kindest thing. He believed that people were basically good, and had the right to be free. He believed that bigotry and prejudice were the worst things a person could be guilty of. He believed in the Golden Rule and in the power of prayer. He believed that America was not just a place in the world, but the hope of the world.

And he believed in taking a break now and then, because, as he said, there's nothing better for the inside of a man than the outside of a horse.

Ronald Reagan spent decades in the film industry and in politics, fields known, on occasion, to change a man. But not this man. From Dixon to Des Moines, to Hollywood to Sacramento, to Washington, D.C., all who met him remembered the same sincere, honest, upright fellow. Ronald Reagan's deepest beliefs never had much to do with fashion or convenience. His convictions were always politely stated, affably argued, and as firm and straight as the columns of this cathedral.



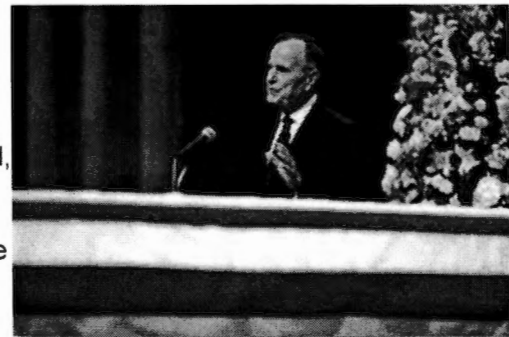
There came a point in Ronald Reagan's film career when people started seeing a future beyond the movies. The actor, Robert Cummings, recalled one occasion. "I was sitting around the set with all these people and we were listening to Ronnie, quite absorbed. I said, 'Ron, have you ever considered someday becoming President?' He said, 'President of what?' 'President of the United States,' I said. And he said, 'What's the matter, don't you like my acting either?'" (Laughter.)

The clarity and intensity of Ronald Reagan's convictions led to speaking engagements around the country, and a new following he did not seek or expect. He often began his speeches by saying, "I'm going to talk about controversial things." And then he spoke of communist rulers as slavemasters, of a government in Washington that had far overstepped its proper limits, of a time for choosing that was drawing near. In the space of a few years, he took ideas and principles that were mainly found in journals and books, and turned them into a broad, hopeful movement ready to govern.

As soon as Ronald Reagan became California's governor, observers saw a star in the West -- tanned, well-tailored, in command, and on his way. In the 1960s, his friend, Bill Buckley, wrote, "Reagan is indisputably a part of America, and he may become a part of American history."

Ronald Reagan's moment arrived in 1980. He came out ahead of some very good men, including one from Plains, and one from Houston. What followed was one of the decisive decades of the century, as the convictions that shaped the President began to shape the times.

He came to office with great hopes for America, and more than hopes -- like the President he had revered and once saw in person, Franklin Roosevelt, Ronald Reagan matched an optimistic temperament with bold, persistent action. President Reagan was optimistic about the great promise of economic reform, and he acted to restore the reward and spirit of enterprise. He was optimistic that a strong America could advance the peace, and he acted to build the strength that mission required. He was optimistic that liberty would thrive wherever it was planted, and he acted to defend liberty wherever it was threatened.



And Ronald Reagan believed in the power of truth in the conduct of world affairs. When he saw evil camped across the horizon, he called that evil by its name. There were no doubters in the prisons and gulags, where dissidents spread the news, tapping to each other in code what the American President had dared to say. There were no doubters in the shipyards and churches and secret labor meetings, where brave men and women began to hear the creaking and rumbling of a collapsing empire. And there were no doubters among those who swung hammers at the hated wall as the first and hardest blow had been struck by President Ronald Reagan.

The ideology he opposed throughout his political life insisted that history was moved by impersonal ties and unalterable fates. Ronald Reagan believed instead in the courage and triumph of free men. And we believe it, all the more, because we saw that courage in him.

As he showed what a President should be, he also showed us what a man should be. Ronald Reagan carried himself, even in the most powerful office, with a decency and attention to small kindnesses that also defined a good life. He was a courtly, gentle and considerate man, never known to slight or embarrass others. Many people across the country cherish letters he wrote in his own hand -- to family members on important occasions; to old friends dealing with sickness and loss; to strangers with questions about his days in Hollywood. A boy once wrote to him requesting federal assistance to help clean up his bedroom. (Laughter.)

The President replied that, "unfortunately, funds are dangerously low." (Laughter.) He continued, "I'm sure your mother was fully justified in proclaiming your room a disaster. Therefore, you are in an excellent position to launch another volunteer program in our nation. Congratulations." (Laughter.)

Sure, our 40th President wore his title lightly, and it fit like a white Stetson. In the end, through his belief in our country and his love for our country, he became an enduring symbol of our country. We think of his steady stride, that tilt of a head and snap of a salute, the big-screen smile, and the glint in his Irish eyes when a story came to mind.

We think of a man advancing in years with the sweetness and sincerity of a Scout saying the Pledge. We think of that grave expression that sometimes came over his face, the seriousness of a man angered by injustice -- and frightened by nothing. We know, as he always said, that America's best days are ahead of us, but with Ronald Reagan's passing, some very fine days are behind us, and that is worth our tears.



Americans saw death approach Ronald Reagan twice, in a moment of violence, and then in the years of departing light. He met both with courage and grace. In these trials, he showed how a man so enchanted by life can be at peace with life's end.

And where does that strength come from? Where is that courage learned? It is the faith of a boy who read the Bible with his mom. It is the faith of a man lying in an operating room, who prayed for the one who shot him before he prayed for himself. It is the faith of a man with a fearful illness, who waited on the Lord to call him home.

Now, death has done all that death can do. And as Ronald Wilson Reagan goes his way, we are left with the joyful hope he shared. In his last years, he saw through a glass darkly. Now he sees his Savior face to face.

And we look to that fine day when we will see him again, all weariness gone, clear of mind, strong and sure, and smiling again, and the sorrow of his parting gone forever.

May God bless Ronald Reagan, and the country he loved.

END 12:26 P.M. EDT



Text of Former Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney Eulogy of Former President Reagan

FDCH, Inc.

Friday, June 11, 2004; 12:32 PM

MULRONEY: In the spring of 1987, President Reagan and I were driven into a large hangar at the Ottawa airport to await the arrival of Mrs. Reagan and my wife Mila prior to departure ceremonies for their return to Washington.

MULRONEY: We were alone except for the security details.

President Reagan's visit had been important, demanding and successful. Our discussions reflected the international agenda of the times: the nuclear threat posed by the Soviet Union and the missile deployment by NATO, pressures in the Warsaw Pact, challenges resulting from the Berlin Wall and the ongoing separation of Germany, and bilateral and hemispheric free trade.

President Reagan had spoken to Parliament, handled complex files with skill and good humor, strongly impressing his Canadian hosts. And here we were waiting for our wives.

When their car drove in a moment later, out stepped Nancy and Mila looking like a million bucks. And as they headed towards us, President Reagan beamed. He threw his arm around my shoulder. And he said with a grin, "You know, Brian, for two Irishmen, we sure married up."

In that visit, in that moment, one saw the quintessential Ronald Reagan: the leader we respected, the neighbor we admired, and the friend we loved, a president of the United States of America whose truly remarkable life we celebrate in this magnificent cathedral today.

Presidents and prime ministers everywhere, I suspect, sometimes wonder how history will deal with them. Some even evince a touch of the insecurity of Thomas Darcy McGee, an Irish immigrant to Canada who became a father of our confederation.

MULRONEY: In one of his poems, McGee, thinking of his birthplace, wrote poignantly, "Am I remembered in Erin? I charge you speak me true. Has my name a sound, a meaning in the scenes my boyhood knew?"

Ronald Reagan will not have to worry about Erin because they remember him well and affectionately there. Indeed they do.

From Erin to Estonia, from Maryland to Madagascar, from Montreal to Monterey, Ronald Reagan does not enter history tentatively. He does so with certainty and panache.

At home and on the world stage, his were not the pallid etchings of a timorous politician. They were the bold strokes of a confident and accomplished leader.

Some in the West, during the early 1980s, believed communism and democracy were equally valid and viable. This was the school of moral equivalence.

In contrast, Ronald Reagan saw Soviet communism as a menace to be confronted in the genuine belief that its squalid underpinnings would fall swiftly to the gathering winds of freedom, provided as he said, that NATO and the industrialized democracies stood firm and united. They did. And we know now who was right.

Ronald Reagan was a president who inspired his nation and transformed the world. He possessed a rare and prized gift called leadership, that ineffable and magical quality that sets some men and women apart so that millions will follow them as they conjure up grand visions and invite their countrymen to dream big and exciting dreams.

I always thought that President Reagan's understanding of the nobility of the presidency coincided with that American dream.

One day, in Brussels, President Mitterand, in referring to President Reagan, said, "Il a vraiment la notion de l'etate"; rough translation: "He really has a sense of the state about him."

MULRONEY: The translation does not fully capture the profundity of the observation.

What President Mitterand meant is that there is a vast difference between the job of president and the role of president.

Ronald Reagan fulfilled both with elegance and ease, embodying himself that unusual alchemy of history and tradition and achievement and inspirational conduct and national pride that defined the special role the president of the United States of America must assume at all times at home and around the world.

La notion de l'etate; no one understood it better than Ronald Reagan. And no one could more eloquently summon his nation to high purpose or bring forth the majesty of the presidency and make it glow better than the man who referred to his own nation as a city on the hill.

May our common future and that of our great nations be guided by wise men and women who will remember always the golden achievements of the Reagan era and the success that can be theirs if the values of freedom and democracy are preserved, unsullied and undiminished until the unfolding decades can remember little else.

I have been truly blessed to have been a friend of Ronald Reagan. I am grateful that our paths crossed and that our lives touched. I shall always remember him with the deepest admiration and affection.

And I will always feel honored by the journey that we traveled together in search of better and more peaceful tomorrows for all God's children everywhere.

MULRONEY: And so in the presence of his beloved and indispensable Nancy, his children, his family, his friends and all of the American people that he so deeply revered,

I say au revoir today to a gifted leader and historic president and a gracious human being.

And I do so with a line from Yeats, who wrote, "Think where man's glory most begins and ends, and say, 'My glory was that I had such friends.'"

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The Text of Former President George H. W. Bush's Eulogy of Former President Reagan

Friday, June 11, 2004; 12:46 PM

GEORGE H.W. BUSH: Our friend was strong and gentle.

Once he called America hopeful, big hearted, idealistic, daring, decent and fair. That was America and, yes, our friend.

And next, Ronald Reagan was beloved because of what he believed. He believed in America so he made it his shining city on a hill. He believed in freedom so he acted on behalf of its values and ideals. He believed in tomorrow so the great communicator became the great liberator.

He talked of winning one for the Gipper and as president, through his relationship with Mikhail Gorbachev with us today, the Gipper, and yes Mikhail Gorbachev, won one for peace around the world.

If Ronald Reagan created a better world for many millions it was because of the world someone else created for him.

Nancy was there for him always. Her love for him provided much of his strength, and their love together transformed all of us as we've seen -- renewed seeing again here in the last few days.

And one of the many memories we all have of both of them is the comfort they provided during our national tragedies.

Whether it was the families of the crew of the Challenger shuttle or the USS Stark or the Marines killed in Beirut, we will never forget those images of the president and first lady embracing them and embracing us during times of sorrow.

So, Nancy, I want to say this to you: Today, America embraces you. We open up our arms. We seek to comfort you, to tell you of our admiration for your courage and your selfless caring.

And to the Reagan kids -- it's OK for me to say that at 80 -- Michael, Ron, Patti, today all of our sympathy, all of our condolences to you all, and remember, too, your sister Maureen home safe now with her father.

GEORGE H.W. BUSH: As his vice president for eight years, I learned more from Ronald Reagan than from anyone I encountered in all my years of public life. I learned kindness; we all did. I also learned courage; the nation did.

Who can forget the horrible day in March 1981, he looked at the doctors in the emergency room and said, "I hope you're all Republicans."

(LAUGHTER)

And then I learned decency; the whole world did. Days after being shot, weak from wounds, he spilled water from a

When it
comes to
public
spending,
everyone's
watching.



washingtonpost.com: The Text of Former President George H. W. Bush's Eulogy of Former Presiden... Page 2 of 2
sink, and entering the hospital room aides saw him on his hands and knees wiping water from the floor. He worried that his nurse would get in trouble.

The good book says humility goes before honor, and our friend had both, and who could not cherish such a man?

And perhaps as important as anything, I learned a lot about humor, a lot about laughter. And, oh, how President Reagan loved a good story.

When asked, "How did your visit go with Bishop Tutu?" he replied, "So-so."

(LAUGHTER)

It was typical. It was wonderful.

And in leaving the White House, the very last day, he left in the yard outside the Oval Office door a little sign for the squirrels. He loved to feed those squirrels. And he left this sign that said, "Beware of the dog," and to no avail, because our dog Millie came in and beat the heck out of the squirrels.

But anyway, he also left me a note, at the top of which said, "Don't let the turkeys get you down."

GEORGE H.W. BUSH: Well, he certainly never let him get him down. And he fought hard for his beliefs. But he led from conviction, but never made an adversary into an enemy. He was never mean-spirited.

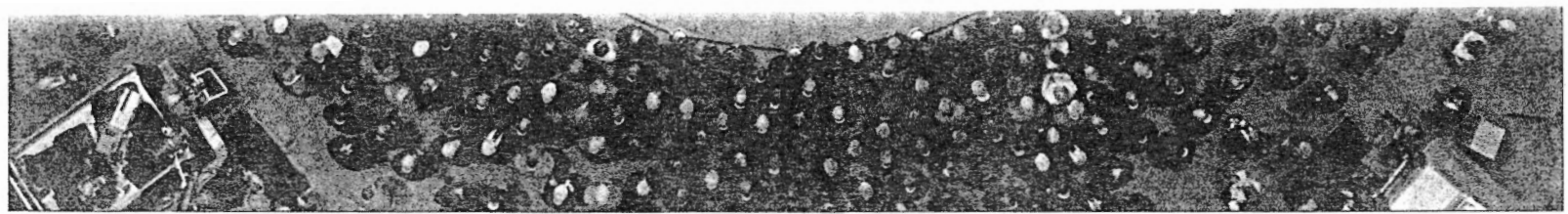
Reverend Billy Graham, who I refer to as the nation's pastor, is now hospitalized and regrets that he can't be here today. And I asked him for a Bible passage that might be appropriate. And he suggested this from Psalm 37: "The Lord delights in the way of the man whose steps he has made firm. Though he stumble, he will not fall for the Lord upholds him with his hand."

And then this, too, from 37: "There is a future for the man of peace."

God bless you, Ronald Wilson Reagan and the nation you loved and led so well.

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Chuck Kennedy/Knight Ridder Photo Service

The casket of former President Ronald Reagan lies in state in the Capitol Rotunda on Wednesday, on the same wooden catafalque that held Abraham Lincoln's body.

Invitations scarce items for Friday funeral service

By Elisabeth Bumiller
The New York Times

WASHINGTON — "Is David Stockman on the list?" one harried volunteer asked another in the Reagan funeral offices at the Mayflower Hotel.

"It's being worked on," the second volunteer replied, acknowledging there had been some "oversights" in invitations to former President Ronald Reagan's state funeral at the Washington National Cathedral on Friday.

So was it possible that Stockman, the Reagan administration budget director reviled at the White House for his tell-all tales that Reagan's supply-side economics did not work, had not been invited?

"I think they'll find a place for him," the volunteer replied carefully. "He's David Stockman."

Such was the scene Wednesday in a chaotic suite of hotel offices in downtown Washington, where former staff members

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Stephan Savola/Associated Press

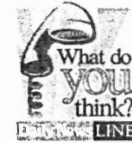
Former first lady Nancy Reagan pauses at her husband's casket lying in state in Washington, D.C.

Reagan eulogized on Capitol Hill

By Ron Hitchens
Knight Ridder Newspapers

WASHINGTON — In a funeral ceremony filled with pageantry and patriotic ritual, Ronald Reagan's body took a hallowed spot in the nation's capital Wednesday as thousands of mourners lined up to say goodbye to the 40th president.

"Knowing that this moment would come has not made it any easier," Vice President Dick Cheney said after Reagan's casket took its place in the Capitol Rotunda on the same wooden platform that held Abraham Lincoln's body. "Fellow Americans, here lies a graceful and gallant man."



> Should Ronald Reagan be on the \$10 bill? See Page 2

House Speaker Dennis Hastert also delivered a eulogy at Wednesday night's Rotunda service, attended by Reagan's family, top government officials and other dignitaries.

After the somber Rotunda service, Nancy Reagan, escorted by Cheney, ran her hand over the flag that encased her husband's casket. Veterans from Reagan's

Please see REAGAN / Page 18

PRESIDENT
REAGAN
1911-2004

> For more photos of the day's events, go online.

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INSIDE

> Details on President Reagan's procession and burial on Friday. Page 13
> Nancy Reagan has been planning this tribute to her husband for many years.

Page 18

For better memory, don't forget to exercise

By Lisa M. Sodders
Staff Writer

People suffering from mild forgetfulness can boost their memory in just two weeks if they stick to the right foods, exercise and take on daily crossword puzzles and other brain teasers, researchers said Wednesday.

With the death of former President Ronald Reagan, who suffered for a decade from Alzheimer's disease, memory

loss is on everybody's mind, said Gary Small, who runs the Center on Aging at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Small and other researchers said people of all ages can improve their memories by including a few simple steps in their daily routines.

"At the most, you would spend a half hour to an hour a day," Small said. "You might roll out

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Advertisement

Arnold more than delivers on federal funds promise

By David M. Drucker
Sacramento Bureau

SACRAMENTO — Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has transformed budget special effects into reality, securing more than the \$350 million he promised to seek from the federal government for next year's budget, administration officials say.

The amount so far totals in excess of \$480 million — a combination of cost savings and new revenue — and is not yet entirely in hand. But Washington has given firm assurances that it is forthcoming, and state officials attribute the

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Arnold has secured more than the \$350 million for next year's budget.

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PRESIDENT REAGAN — 1911-2004

Funeral invitations in extraordinary demand

FUNERAL / From Page 1

of the Reagan White House — all grayer, broader and two decades older — had assembled from around the country for a final reunion of sorts. Their task was to handle the 1,000 invitations Nancy Reagan had sent to family, friends and former members of her husband's administration, and it was, as one of them put it, "insanity in here."

Like invitations to inaugurations and White House state dinners, the tickets to the first presidential state funeral in more than three decades were in extraordinary demand.

"It's hard, it's bad, it's voluminous," said Michele Woodward, a former member of Reagan's presidential advance staff who was one of about 10 women, all of them one-time Reagan administration members, answering the incessantly ringing phones.

Rick Ahearn, a former Reagan advance staff member who is the family's representative in charge of funeral logistics, put it this way, "It's important for people to understand that Mrs. Reagan is burying her husband right now with fewer than 1,000 seats available to her."

Although National Cathedral holds 4,000 people, 3,000 seats at the funeral have been reserved for members of Congress, the diplomatic corps (each nation represented in Washington received two tickets), the Supreme Court, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and foreign leaders.

But Mrs. Reagan's list was the one that mattered, and as of Wednesday afternoon it was unclear how many on the list had accepted, or even who was on it. Ahearn did say that all Cabinet members from the two terms of the Reagan administration had been invited, as had all members of the Reagan White House senior staff. But who ranked as "senior staff" members was murky, Ahearn said. "We have a limited number of tickets," he said. "You can't go by strict protocol."

Generally, Ahearn and the other volunteers said, callers had not made angry demands, pulled rank or otherwise exhibited the kind of over-the-top Washington behavior that normally accompanies such historic and status-filled events.

"It's not as bad as I thought it would be," said Robert Higdon, a Reagan family friend who had helped plan the funeral and was

bustling around the staff offices in the Mayflower on Wednesday. "People are just more or less saying, 'I'd really like to come.' There hasn't been anybody calling and saying, 'This person was so-and-so and so-and-so.'"

Later in the day, shortly before the arrival of Reagan's coffin at Andrews Air Force Base, another reunion of Reagan officials got under way to literal pandemonium over a false alarm on Capitol Hill. At 4:40 p.m., while top Reagan administration officials were sipping cocktails and eating canapés in a Senate reception room, police officers burst in and shouted for everyone to flee the building.

"This is not a drill!" members of the Capitol Police Department screamed. "There is an incoming aircraft! You have one minute!"

Among those chased out of the building were former Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig Jr.; former Vice President Dan Quayle; Jeanne Kirkpatrick, a former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations; former Attorney General Edwin A. Meese III; Richard V. Allen, a former national security adviser; Kenneth M. Duberstein, a former White House chief of staff; Rupert Murdoch, chairman and chief

executive of the News Corp.; Tom Korologos, a Reagan White House aide and longtime Republican lobbyist who recently served as an adviser in Baghdad to L. Paul Bremer, the top American civilian administrator in Iraq; Bob Collacello, a Vanity Fair writer who is working on a biography of Mrs. Reagan; and Margaret D. Tutwiler, a former Reagan White House aide who became the State Department spokeswoman in the first Bush administration and the ambassador to Morocco in the second.

In a scene reminiscent of the evacuation of the White House on Sept. 11, 2001, women took off their heels and men took off their jackets and everybody raced down the steps, hair and handbags flying, pursued by police officers who told them they could not stop in spite of the heat.

By the time the group did stop in a patch of grass between the Senate building and Union Station, everyone was soaked with sweat.

"Some of these people are not 13," observed 1 utwiler.

"I didn't know Rupert Murdoch could run so fast," said Collacello.

The cause of the false alarm was a plane flying south of Ronald Reagan National Airport with a

radio problem, so that air traffic controllers lost track of it, triggering the panic. But within half an hour,

an all-clear was given and the former Reagan officials headed back into the building.

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Reagan eulogized in Capitol Rotunda

REAGAN / From Page 1

two terms in the White House then took their turns saying goodbye. President George W. Bush, who was attending an international summit in Georgia on Wednesday, will deliver a eulogy at another funeral service at the Washington National Cathedral on Friday. Reagan will be buried later that day at sunset at his presidential library in Simi Valley.

Outside, Americans and foreign visitors from all walks of life waited patiently in steaming heat and humidity for the chance to view Reagan's flag-draped coffin, which will be on display in the Capitol until early Friday morning.

As many as 200,000 mourners are expected to pay their respects before the round-the-clock vigil ends.

"It is their being here that I think would mean more to him than any words we say," Hastert said in his eulogy at the Rotunda service.

Rep. Brad Sherman, D-Sherman Oaks, who stood with other members of Congress as Reagan was eulogized by Cheney inside the Rotunda, said he was a recent graduate of law school when Reagan was first elected president.

"Obviously, I disagreed with him on an awful lot of public policy. At the same time, I admired his graciousness, his comity toward others, his optimism. Hoy, I wish that kind of personality had been on our side."

The two-term president died at age 93 at his California home Saturday after a 10-year struggle with Alzheimer's disease.

Reagan, an actor-turned-politician who began planning his funeral in 1981, was returned to Washington with patriotic flourishes that were a hallmark of his presidency. His body arrived at Andrews Air Force Base from California late in the day on a blue-and-white Boeing 747 that normally serves as Air Force One.

His wife and his three surviving children, Ron Reagan, Michael Reagan and Patti Davis, also were on board. Another child, Maureen Reagan, died of skin cancer in 2001.

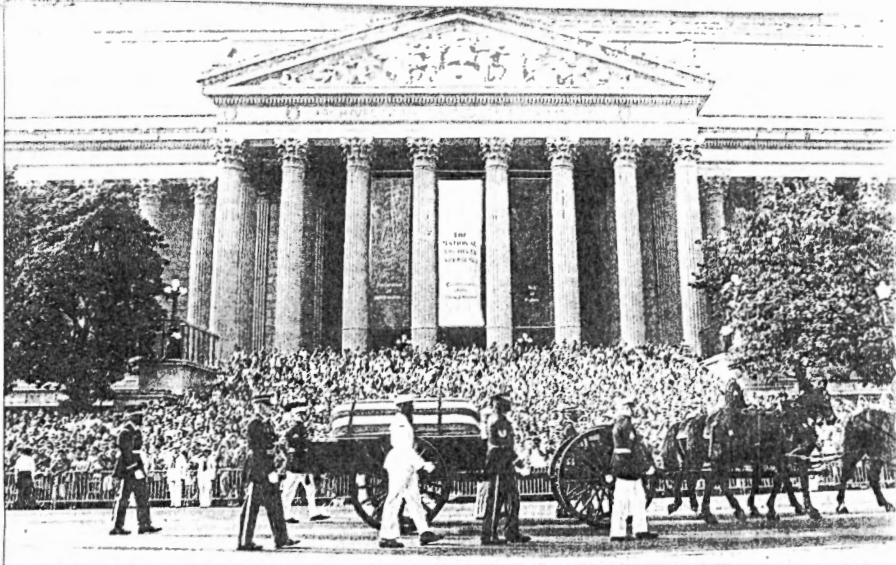
Nancy Reagan, wearing a simple black dress, swallowed hard but maintained her composure as the casket was loaded into a hearse at the air base to the sounds of "My Country 'Tis of Thee."

As the motorcade sped through a neighborhood on its route from the Maryland suburbs to Washington, residents lined the highway and waved.

On Constitution Avenue, within view of the Washington Monument and opposite the White House that Reagan occupied from 1981 to 1989, the flag-draped coffin was loaded onto a horse-drawn caisson built during World War I to hold a cannon.

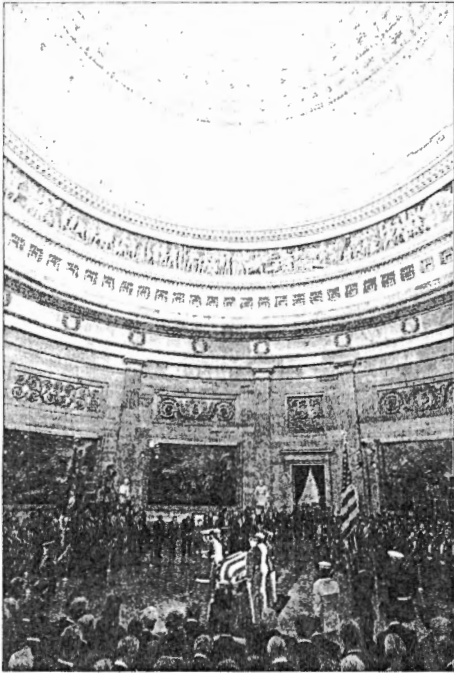
In a somber ritual that left some spectators in tears, a riderless horse followed behind the funeral wagon as the procession made its way to the Capitol along the center stripe of Constitution Avenue. The horse carried an empty saddle with a pair of Reagan's boots stuck backward in the stirrups to symbolize the commander in chief's parting look at the troops he once led. A saber dangled from the saddle.

"God bless you, Nancy!" one man shouted to the grieving widow, who acknowledged the crowd's applause with a wave and a mouthed "Thank you."



The flag-draped casket passes by the National Archives building Wednesday, during the Reagan funeral procession to the Capitol.

Elise Amendable/Associated Press



Ron Edmonds/Associated Press

Dignitaries gather in the Rotunda of the Capitol as an honor guard stands next to President Reagan's casket.

On streets normally clogged with rush-hour traffic, the quiet clomp of the horses' hoofs, the tread of marchers' feet and patriotic music from military bands replaced the noise of engines, horns and sirens. Mourners, standing more than 20 deep in some areas, fell silent as the casket neared. Soldiers lining the route saluted their former commander

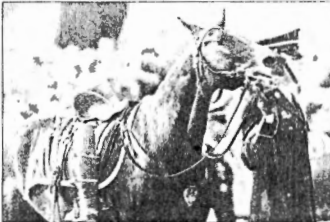
in chief. Capitol police distributed more than 150,000 bottles of water to the sweat-drenched crowd, and more than 100 people were treated for heat-related problems.

As the procession neared the Capitol, 21 fighter jets flying in waves appeared and roared across the casket's route, about 1,000 feet over head. A single F-15E

fighter broke from its spot on the wing and soared skyward in the "missing man" maneuver, signifying the loss of a comrade in arms.

It was a loss shared by many in the crowd that lined the funeral route.

"He had been sick for a long time, but I was struck more than I ever thought I would be by the



A riderless horse follows the caisson bearing President Reagan's body as the procession makes its way toward the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C., on Wednesday afternoon.

Jeff Lawrence/Knight-Ridder Photo Co.



Rick McKay/Cox News Service

Former first lady Nancy Reagan touches the casket holding the body of her husband as it lies in state in the Capitol Rotunda on Capitol Hill.

finality of it. He's gone," said D.J. Bettencourt of Salem, Mass., who arrived in Washington before dawn to get a front-row seat on the procession route.

Bettencourt, 20, a freshman at the University of Massachusetts, has no personal memory of the Reagan years, but said, "I'm proud to say that I was a Reagan baby."

Ron and Karen Tanner, seen nearby on portable chairs, they voted for Reagan in both his presidential campaigns, felt obligated to turn out for funeral.

"We would have voted a 11 time if he would've run. An fourth," Ron Tanner said. "I is the least we can do. He did for us. He deserves our respect."



PRESIDENT REAGAN — 1911-2004

Nancy's tiny figure looms large in last goodbyes

By Alessandra Stanley
The New York Times

One of the more touching images in television's long farewell to Ronald Reagan has been the large, workaday eyeglasses his stylish widow wore as she reached out to touch her husband's coffin in front of the Capitol. It was one of the rare occasions when the former first lady had not looked Bergdorf-impeccable. And that prosaic sign of mourning fit neatly into a larger pageant of family grief and national sorrow.

Nancy Reagan has always insisted that she never regretted giving up her Hollywood career. And yet as television lovingly records every detail of Reagan's majestic state funeral this week, it has become clear that his widow had one last big production in her:

The Reagans began planning the funeral when he took office in 1981, and she has fine-tuned the details every year since he fell ill. Nancy Reagan, who made only one, undistinguished movie with her husband, "Hellcats of the Navy," has written, directed and produced the final, definitive film of the couple's career.

She did not do it alone, of course. The moving, televised tableau was green-lighted by the most powerful production company in the world, the U.S. government. And the six-day tribute is being distributed, live and nonstop, by American broadcast networks and 24-hour cable news programs.

And love, not just the Cold War, has been a leitmotif of all the fond reminiscences. It is hardly surprising: Nancy Reagan, who

published a collection of her husband's love letters four years ago, has long burnished that private side of her husband's legacy. "Let's take a look back at the lifelong love affair of Nancy and Ron," is how one MSNBC anchor put it Wednesday morning, giving their relationship a first-name status usually reserved for the likes of Antony and Cleopatra or Scarlett and Rhett.

The outpouring of sadness and sentiment as well as the sheer number of people who have turned out to pay their respects to Reagan are a tribute to his magnetism and popularity. The surge of admiration is also a sign that the country is hungry for a moment of unity and shared experience.

If anyone is to be credited for providing regal grandeur to the

ceremony it is his wife, who, with the help of the loyal aide Michael Deaver, had always managed the stagecraft of her husband's political career. She brought the same attention to every detail of his final send-off. Describing her backstage role in one of many television interviews this week, Bob Colacello, a friend and biographer, cited what another first friend, Barry Diller, once said about the couple: "Reagan doesn't worry about anything, so Nancy worries about everything."

Wednesday's procession to the Capitol was as solemn and elaborate as John F. Kennedy's. It was also packed with the kind of symbolism — and rich production values — that marked the 1981 Inauguration, which the Reagans used to signal a new era

of unabashed confidence and opulent display. She had personally approved every detail of presidential custom, from the riderless, jet-black horse that walked in the cortege with Reagan's riding boots reversed in the stirrups to the F-15s that streaked above Constitution Avenue in the missing-man formation.

Even the timing of Reagan's burial at his presidential library in the Simi Valley hills was planned for sunset, a mourning-in-America moment that he himself wanted as a final cinematic symbol of his life.

For days, the tiny figure of Nancy Reagan, supported by the children who were once so estranged, elicited pity and admiration. And her drawn face seemed to lighten a little as

crowds applauded — some shouting "We love you, Mrs. Reagan" — as she walked past. She waved her eyeglasses in salute to her well-wishers as she walked. Once in her black limousine, all that could be seen of her was a limp white hand waving weakly through the window, but on the Capitol steps, she stood apart as her husband's coffin was carried by an honor guard into the Rotunda.

For all her frailty, — and she looked almost undone by Vice President Dick Cheney's high praise — she proved a dignified and formidable figure. Commentators praised her selfless loyalty when her husband fell ill and commended her campaign on behalf of embryonic stem cell research, which President George W. Bush opposes.

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