

relationship with those leaders? Thank you, sir.

The President. Yes. Well, we go to different corners of the room, and we face the wall—no. [Laughter] Look, there is—we're united by values. We're united by common values. And therefore, it's a easy place to start conversations. And it's to be expected that nations don't always agree on every issue. But we do agree in the power of free societies. We do agree in a free press. We don't necessarily agree everything the free press writes, but we agree in a free press. We agree with free religions. There's great agreement.

And so, therefore, it's—this is a—it facilitates good and healthy conversation. And look, there was obviously a disagreement over whether or not we enforced the demands of the U.N. I fully understand that, but now that's past. And I know there's great speculation about the relationship between the United States and France. Let's face it. Most people say the United States and the world differ. No, it's the United States and France. That's where the focus generally is, and as Jacques Chirac said yesterday, relations with the United States are excellent. He's right.

That doesn't mean we agree every time we speak. But nevertheless, we've got very good relations. And I appreciate my working relationship with him.

And so the meetings are very cordial. And you probably want me to say something about Vladimir Putin. Yes, well, it's because you—I've always had good relations with Vladimir, ever since the first time I met him. You remember where I met him first?

Q. Slovenia.

The President. Very good. Very good, yes. [Laughter] That's impressive. But he's a—you know, he is a person who's got opinions, and I admire his strong opinions. I like courageous leaders, people who express their opinions. It's—to me, it's hard to have a good meeting with somebody if you're always wondering what their opinion is, and you kind of leave feeling somewhat empty. That's not how you get things done, as far as I'm concerned. When you sit around the table, you say what's on your mind. You know, "Here's what I think. What do you think?" And if there's a difference, try to explain the dif-

ferences and try to find common ground to work together.

We've got too much to do in a world beset by terror, poverty, and disease to allow a policy difference to prevent us from working together. And that's why these G-8 summits are meaningful and worthwhile. And that's why I'm really glad to have been the host here in Georgia.

Putting the hook on me? Okay. Listen, we're off to Washington. I've got a—I've got the—I will be paying tribute to President Reagan here in about an hour and a half or so and then will be visiting with Mrs. Reagan at the Blair House. I appreciate your understanding for the need for us, whoever is traveling with me, to get moving so that we can be on time for a solemn night and a day of remembrance tomorrow for a magnificent world leader.

God bless you all. Thanks for coming.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 3:27 p.m. at the International Media Center. In his remarks, he referred to President Ghazi al-Ujayl al-Yawr, Prime Minister Ayad al-Alawi, and Minister of Displacement and Migration Pascale Isho Warda of the Iraqi interim government; Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya; Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia; Charlie Duelfer, head of the Iraq Survey Group; President Jacques Chirac of France; and President Vladimir Putin of Russia. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Eulogy at the National Funeral Service for President Ronald Reagan *June 11, 2004*

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 10 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 Nelle 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 the 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 happens 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, DC, 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 rewards 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 that 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 tides 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*]

See, 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 the head and snap of the 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 for 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 this parting gone forever.

May God bless Ronald Reagan and the country he loved.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:09 p.m. at the National Cathedral. In his remarks, he referred to Episcopal minister and former Senator John C. Danforth of Missouri.

The President's Radio Address

June 12, 2004

Good morning. This week, America mourned the passing of President Ronald Reagan. We remembered a gentle, decent man and one of the greatest leaders our Nation has known. He was a courageous patriot whose leadership transformed the country and the world he leaves behind.

In this time of sadness, we think especially of Nancy Reagan, a loyal, loving wife of 52 years, and the President's three children and the rest of the Reagan family.

Ronald Wilson Reagan entered the world more than 93 years ago in an apartment above a local bank in Illinois. His life would include success in careers from sports broadcasting to film acting to public office. Along the way, his deepest convictions were formed, and through all the trials of life, those convictions never wavered.

Ronald Reagan believed that everything happens for a reason and that we can trust in God's purposes. He believed that people are basically good. He had no tolerance for bigotry or injustice. Above all, he believed in the courage and triumph of free men and in the capacity of the American people to overcome any obstacle.

President Reagan brought those convictions to the White House in 1981, and he departed 8 years later with achievements that have endured. With bold, persistent action, he restored the confidence of our Nation, strengthened the spirit of free enterprise, challenged and shamed an oppressive empire, and inspired millions with his conviction and moral courage.

As he showed what a President should be, he also showed us what a man should be. Ronald Reagan carried himself with a decency and attention to the small kindnesses that also define a good life. He was a courtly, gentle, and considerate man, never known

to slight or embarrass others. From the Oval Office, he took time to answer letters from schoolchildren and grandmothers and countless strangers curious about life in the White House.

Ronald Reagan deeply loved the United States of America, and that love is being returned. Over the past week, tens of thousands of mourners stood in line in California and in Washington, DC, to pay their final respects. There were 21-gun salutes and dignified processions and homemade memorials at a funeral home in Santa Monica.

Now that Nancy Reagan has taken her husband to his place of rest, we offer our gratitude. Our country is stronger, and our world is freer for the brave leadership of this modest son of America. Ronald Reagan always told us that for America, our best was yet to come. We know that is true for him too. His work is done, and now a shining city awaits him.

May God bless Ronald Reagan. Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:01 a.m. on June 11 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on June 12. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 11 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Proclamation 7796—Flag Day and National Flag Week, 2004

June 12, 2004

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

For more than 200 years, the American flag has served as a symbol of our country's enduring freedom and unity. Old Glory has welcomed generations of immigrants to America's shores and is displayed proudly on homes, at schools, and over businesses across our country. During times of war, our flag has rallied our citizens to defend the blessings of liberty at home and abroad. It has accompanied our troops into battle and been given to grieving families at the grave sites