

Ronald Reagan

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Ronald Reagan did many things in his life. He was a Hollywood actor, family man, soldier during World War II, and governor (American President: Ronald Wilson Reagan: Life Before the Presidency). He also served as the 39th President of the United States from 1981-1989. During this time he accomplished many key goals and achievements that were influential in shaping the future of the country. In this article we will look at four of his biggest accomplishments while serving as president.

The Cold War—During the Reagan Presidency, the Cold War was raging. Tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union were constantly threatening the peace and stability of each country, and the world as a whole. President Reagan realized the threat that the US faced and sought to confront it. He fought the expansion of the Soviet Empire (Lettow, 2006). He opened dialogue with Soviet leaders like Michael Gorbachev (Lettow, 2006). Both Reagan and Gorbachev were able to work together on issues such as nuclear weapons reductions. In fact, during Reagan's presidency, both the US and the Soviet Union were able to cut the number of nuclear weapons they had (Lettow,

2006). He encouraged peace and democracy in countries all over the world and provided support to rebels who fought against the spread of communism (Lettow, 2006). These actions played a critical role in the downfall of the Soviet Union. Ultimately the Cold War ended and

President Reagan was a key part in that process.

Economic Growth—When President Reagan took office, the country was suffering economically.

Due to the policies

of his predecessor, the economy went through a horrible recession from 1981-1982 (Ferrara, 2011). An energy crisis affected the economy drastically. Inflation was rampant and income had dropped dramatically for American families (Ferrara, 2011). Unemployment was over 10% and the poverty rate was climbing (Ferrara, 2011). President Reagan went to work to fix this problem. He rolled back regulations, pursued anti-inflation measures, and cut the budget (Ferrara, 2011). President Reagan also cut taxes and reformed the tax code (Top 10 Reagan Achievements, 2011). His actions led to a period of growth that some say lasted for the next 20 years (Ferrara, 2011). President Reagan believed that America's best days were still ahead. The best way to get to them was by improving



the economic situation through pro-growth policies.

Bipartisanship—President Reagan knew that in order to be an effective president who could get things accomplished, he would need a broad coalition of support. He sought out help and support for policies that democrats and republicans alike could champion. He worked closely with elected democratic leaders like Speaker of the House Tip O’Neil to pass legislation on a broad range of issues. Some of the key legislation passed affected economic policy, that tax code, immigration policy, and Cold War policy. By doing this, President Reagan showed the American people that their government and its elected leaders could come together to work for the greater good. This helped restore the American peoples support in their government.

Energizing the Republican Party—President Reagan played a key role in shaping the Republican Party and its future. During the 1970’s the country had become disillusioned with the Republican Party. This had largely to do with Watergate and the corruption and scandal many associated with the party. Ronald Reagan helped to reinvigorate the party. He built a broad base of support that included evangelicals, conservatives, moderate democrats and disenchanted republicans (Top 10 Reagan Achievements). They carried him to victory in both elections, with President Reagan winning a landslide 49 states in the 1984 election (American President: Ronald Wilson Reagan: Campaigns and Elections). By building this broad base of

support, he increased excitement and support of the party. This excitement carried over in to the election of President George H.W. Bush, his vice president (American President: Ronald Wilson Reagan: Campaigns and Elections). It also played a role in the republicans taking over control of the House of Representatives for the first time in 40 years in 1994. To this day, many republicans point to Ronald Reagan as the one who rescued the Republican Party from despair. They hold him up as a beacon of light for the Republican Party and conservatism.

President Reagan was an important and influential president. These are just some of his accomplishments that he was able bring about during his presidency. Many of these accomplishments still have an impact on our politics today, and his legacy will continue to grow as we look back on him.



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