

The presidency of ronald reagan



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From Hollywood actor to Governor and finally the 40th President of the United States Ronald Reagan was a Republican with a charismatic style that help both domestically and foreign. Reagan a Democrat in his young days was an admirer of President Franklin Roosevelt because his father had found work in the New Deal Office. Reagan took over office after defeating one term President Jimmy Carter who like Reagan was also a Washington outsider that became President.

In the 1980s going against Carter, Reagan ran on the ideas of increasing the military spending, cutting taxes, balancing the budget, and banning abortion. Reagan and his administration changed the presidency, set examples for future presidents, and became a dominant figure that presidents today talk about his footsteps. In this research I will be looking into the structure of the Reagan administration and how he used his powers to accomplish the things he had set forth in his agenda.

In the administration Reagan would allow the people working inside of it to do there job. Many called it the hands-off approach because Reagan wanted to delegate a lot and he did that with his Chief of Staff because he was only interested in the outcomes and did not want to be bothered with details. Reagan's hands-off approach frustrated his administration because it didn't give the staff the policy guidance. I don't believe a chief executive should supervise every detail of what goes on in his organization. The chief executive should set broad policy and general ground rules, tell people what he or she wants them to do, then let them do it... Set clear goals and appoint good people to help you achieve them. As long as they are doing what you have in mind, don't interfere, but if somebody drops the ball, intervene and

make a change. The president had an agenda and many top advisors at this time, but the ones that were Reagan's go to guys to really push the agenda were three men known as The Troika they were Edwin Meese, James Baker, and Michael Deaver. Reagan's first counselor Meese was someone that had a lot of expectations to push Reagan's agenda because they were so close from running his campaign, running the transition team and his governor's office. Meese had power on foreign and domestic policy and fully joined and participated in cabinet meetings. In his first term with Reagan, Meese was highly relied on being given charge of coordination and supervision of the domestic policy staff and the National Security Council. Meese was seen as more conservative than Reagan and may have wanted to push some of his own agenda. It seems as Meese would be given the chief of staff title but there was a lot of distrust between his staff and Reagan's' other adviser Baker was given the Chief of Staff and like Meese had over the domestic policy, Baker had that power over the White House staff. Baker was the saler and he was able to get some of the agenda through congress. Deaver had also been with Reagan sine his governor days. He was seen as a son to the Reagan's and was given the title deputy chief of staff because of his lack of charm that couldn't get to the public. Deaver also had the closet office to Reagan and had easy access to him, Deaver says that I always felt it was my responsibility to tell Reagan when I thought he was wrong. As we know presidents have a busy job and we wonder how they get to spend time with their family, unlike Meese and Baker, Deaver had a close connection to the East Wing with the First Lady he would talk to Nancy about Ronald that was she could keep up with him. Collectively you could say the troika was Reagan's chief of staff as a group. Dick Wirthlin, Reagan's pollster and <https://assignbuster.com/the-presidency-of-ronald-reagan/>

strategist had explained in his memoir that at sometimes Reagan didn't know what was going on in the White House, he would tell the staff his agenda and he wanted the staff to get it done in the best way. In the administration's first term Wirthlin did a poll and more than half of people who respond thought the troika made the big decisions in the White House.

Things wouldn't stay the same for long. During Reagan's second term he had a shift in his administration Donald Regan who was Reagan's Treasury Secretary in his first term became his chief of staff and Baker the chief of staff became the Treasury Secretary. But this was not decided by Reagan but by the troika and Nancy Reagan. Regan wanted to change the style of the White House when he came into office, he wanted to reduce collegiality because he thought it should be a hierarchy. Regan didn't allow access to Reagan and treated Reagan as the only person he would listen to. Regan was a Marine and CEO of Merrill Lynch, he used that training and style of his life into the White House. A former coworker of Regan had said His weakness is that his ego was so strong he did not pick good subordinates. Or if they were, he broke them. He couldn't stand the competition. I'm a Marine so I know from that, that Regan was taught to have a strong ego and to think of being better than everyone else and that's why he had a strong ego and didn't want competition in his way. But his ego caused people to leave the White House, Regan wanted to be known when it was time for accomplishments and in big pictures and when it came to times of trouble he would push the blame on the president and this caused Reagan to ask for his resignation in 1987. Reagan gave the chief of staff job to Howard Baker who

was a former senator in order to get back into good terms with congress that Reagan had caused tensions with.

During most of Reagan's administration he had shifts as who controlled the Senate between Democrats and Republicans but in the House side during his entire administration it was controlled by Democrats. Reagan would have to work with Congress in order to fulfill his agenda and get things passed. After defeating Jimmy Carter by a landslide in electoral votes and coming in with a hostage crisis, the Democrats were willing to work with Reagan. Reagan used his charm to work with Congress and people wouldn't challenge to vote against him at this time either. Reagan used what Fred Greenstein called the hidden-hand leadership by having member's constituents call first, then White House staff, and eventually the president himself to pressure them. The economy was in a mess at this time and Reagan had the Senate to back him he just needed the House which was controlled by Democrats to help him pass his economic plan. Southern Democrats known as the Boll Weevils were blocking these efforts, the president decide to go public to get to them by making formal addresses to the nation and informal remarks to the media. After lobbying by the Reagan administration they finally got to Democrats to vote with them and pass a new fiscal plan but it took efforts by the president himself to get them fully on board by direct phone call and telegraph. Reagan was able to push and get passed the largest spending cuts in history, largest tax cut, and largest military peacetime expansion. All this came early in the administration by efforts from the White House and the president himself but it would decline slowly after the shift in the administration and lack of relationship the second term of the administration

had with congress. In the end they had seen Reagan as the lame-duck president and congress knew he wouldn't be able to get much done.

Ronald Reagan came out as a very successful president mainly from his first term. He was able to rely on the Troika and a sometimes used the power of his office in order to really push his agenda. But the shift in his administration caused a downfall for him and his administration and decline in relationship with Congress caused a bump in his presidency that he tried to fix near the end by shift his administration back to one that could work with Congress and it ultimately helped a bit because it allowed his Vice President George H. W. Bush to follow in his steps and win the presidency after Reagan's term came to an end.