THE POLITICAL IMAGE OF RONALD REAGAN IN THE 1966 CALIFORNIA GUBERNATORIAL CAMPAIGN

A Thesis

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The successful election of Ronald Reagan to the governorship of California was hardly anticipated by most people when he first began to ponder running for office in early 1965. The New York Times of January 23, 1965, stated:

> With the gubernatorial competition about 14 months away, the Republican organization sources privately note many obstacles to Mr. Reagan's emergence as a contender. He has no great record of party service and concedes he has little organized support, they say.[1]

When conservative Republicans came knocking at his door in January 1965, Reagan was a bit shocked by the idea of running for office and said:

> I'm honored by all the interest. Politics is nothing I'd ever thought of as a career. But it's something I'm going to give deep consideration and thought.[2]

That was the beginning of politics as a career for Reagan.

Reagan's success seemed to lie in three factors: (1) He was the man for the times. California desired a strong leader with a political philosophy like that imagined of Reagan. (2) He looked the part. Reagan

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[1] New York Times, January 23, 1966.

[2] Ibid.

spoke well and fulfilled the role his advisors suggested for him. (3) The sophisticated use of image was new and Reagan's image was well handled by Spencer-Roberts and Associates. Each of these factors will be considered in this study.

That an actor could become governor of the populous and growing state of California was shocking to some and comforting to others. At the beginning of the campaign people said of Reagan: I disagree with him ". . . but dammit I can't help but feel that basically he is a nice guy."[3] Said a Los Angeles lawyer and former Republican office holder: "He has done nothing but demean the process of government without a day of experience. He should serve as an apprentice first."[4] Others felt the same and faulted him because his only business was show business; he had no experience in public office.[5]

Commonweal stated: ". . . it didn't matter: clean-cut, nice-guy parts, everybody liked him, and his movies were still running on the late show."[6] Shana

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[3]James Phelan, "Can Reagan Win in California?" Saturday Evening Post, CCXXXIX (June 4, 1966), 92.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Richard Oulahan and William Lambert, "The Real Ronald Reagan Stands Up." Life, LX (January 21, 1966), 75.

[6]"Ronald Reagan Star," Commonweal, LXXXIV (June 24, 1966), 383.

Alexander in an editorial in Life magazine expressed a feeling shared by William F. Buckley that:

> . . . [Reagan] is well known to the voting public, primarily on account of his acting career; and he is known as a good guy, a role he inevitably played in the movies, in which he performed extraordinarily well no doubt because his role was in character.[7]

This was the feeling expressed through the mass media by almost everyone in the early days of the primary campaign. Reagan was a good actor, a fine man of good character, who worked diligently behind the scenes in the party, but who should not run for office because he had no political experience. The tinsel and fantasy world of Hollywood were not experience for the real world of politics.

Through hard work, intelligent campaigning, and good advice, Reagan changed this attitude; somehow he developed an image that made people feel they could trust him in public office. This feeling is attested by his sweeping victory in the primary by a 2-1 margin over another Republican, George Christopher, and 50,000 more votes than Pat Brown received in the Democratic primary--even though voter enrollment in California shows three Democrats for every two Republicans. In November Reagan defeated Brown by a million votes.

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[7]"My Technicolor Senator," Life, LVII (December 4, 1964), 30.

The fact that such an unprecedented feat was carried through with such great success makes it worthy of study. What methods of persuasion were used to effect such a victory?

Other studies of similar situations have been done. Paul Rosenthal in his study of the John F. Kennedy-Richard M. Nixon debates found that personal image made Kennedy the type of person one would elect president.[8] Through his television image Kennedy convinced people that he was the type of person they could trust. His image squelched the charge that he was not experienced enough for the presidency.

William Linsley in his study of Learned Hand found that this respected judge was able to transfer personal respect to his credibility as a judge.[9] Macaulay, in writing of Pitt the Younger, tells us that he ". . . inspired respect and confidence because of the correctness of his private life."[10] Reagan also inspired respect

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[8]Paul I. Rosenthal, "Ethos in the Presidential Campaign 1960: a Study of the Basic Persuasive Process of the Kennedy-Nixon Debates," (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, University of California at Los Angeles, 1964).

[9]William Allen Linsley, "A Study of Ethical Proof in the Criminal Law Opinions of Judge Learned Hand," Dissertation Abstracts, XXIV (October, 1963), 2619.

[10]Lester Thonssen and A. Craig Baird, Speech Criticism (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1948), p. 383.

and confidence of a sort, but Reagan's case is not quite similar. Pitt, Kennedy and Hand had spent most of their lives in public service. All that was required for them was to use their personal image to enhance and develop their image of public service. Reagan had no public service experience to draw on. He had not been a Senator or a judge. He was an actor. His unique problem further justifies an investigation of the campaign methods of Ronald Reagan to develop a political image.

I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this study is to investigate the 1966 gubernatorial campaign of California to determine how Reagan created a politically favorable image in the minds of the California voters.

When Reagan entered the California campaign he had little or no political image. He was not recognized as being competent in the field of politics. His image at the beginning of the campaign is probably best expressed by the Congressional Quarterly which for the first several months of the primary referred to him as ". . . actor Ronald Reagan, a militant conservative."[11]

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[11]"Political Notes: California," Congressional Quarterly, XXIII (September 24, 1965), 1938.

This study of the 1966 campaign will focus on the development of the political image of Ronald Reagan. Reagan had no significant political image before the campaign. By political image is meant a perception by the voters that one has competence in the field of politics to carry out the duties required of a person in political office.

This type of political campaigning which concentrates on a candidate's image--how he appears to the public--rather than on what he says has become increasingly important with the advent of television reporting. Television added a new dimension of intimacy to the contact of candidate and voter.

Gene Wycoff in The Image Candidates asserts that "image politics" occurs in a campaign in which the issues are clouded and the people make their decisions for the man creating the best image. The man therefore becomes the issue in many campaigns.[12]

In addition, issues have become less important to many voters because of a lack of education or disinterest in current problems of government. Therefore, unable to make decisions on issues which arise in a campaign, they

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[12]Gene Wycoff, The Image Candidates (New York: Macmillian Company, 1968), pp. 88, 212.

vote for an image that they can more easily evaluate.[13]

As Robert Lane and David Sears write:

> In short, most citizens are not . . . notably "rational" in their political thinking. Their main interest lies in defending emotionally derived and poorly considered opinions--opinions based on early beliefs, partisan adherence to the norms of various groups, and the selfish personal and economic interests[14]

This statement supports the idea that policy issues have become less important. It also lends support to the idea that the candidate may become the issue.

A model derived by Ithiel de Sola Pool from campaign observations shows that the electorate can be broken into three groups: (1) those who are firm in their views for one political party, (2) those who are firm in their views for the other party, and (3) those who are apathetic and are more easily persuaded to vote for one or the other candidate in an election. Elections are usually decided by this third group.[15]

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[13]Walter Lippman, Public Opinion (New York: Macmillian Company, 1922), chapter 1.

[14]Robert E. Lane and David O. Sears, Public Opinion (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), p. 75.

[15]Ithiel de Sola Pool, "The Effect of Communication on Voting Behavior," in The Science of Human Communication, Wilbur Schramm, editor (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1963), pp. 528-37.

This is a study of image making in an election and of its relationship to what is known of ethos. This study attempts to define image and its relationship to speaking and gaining votes and ultimately winning an election in California.

This study will attempt to answer the following questions:

1. What is image?
   a) what is ethos?
   b) what is image and how does it relate to ethos?
   c) what is political image?

2. What was Ronald Reagan's political image in the 1966 campaign and how was it developed?
   a) what kind of an image did Reagan have before the campaign?
   b) what kind of an image did he have during the campaign?
   c) how did he develop a winning political image?
   d) what part did his speaking play in developing his winning image in the campaign?

II. RELATED STUDIES

There have been two master's theses concerning the public speaking of Ronald Reagan. One by James Todd Hayes, "Ronald Reagan as a 'Thoughtful' Speaker--the Sources of Evidence for Selected Assertions from His Campaign Speech of October 27, 1964," was completed at Kansas State Teachers College in 1965. It is of value to this study because it includes a copy of Reagan's speech "A Time for Choosing," showing audience reaction.

The other thesis, by Kathleen Corey, "Two Types of Identification in the 1966 Gubernatorial Primary Speeches of Ronald Reagan and Governor Edmund G. Brown," was completed at the University of California at Santa Barbara in 1966. This study is important because it discusses identification as used by Reagan in the primary campaign. Corey's thesis also provided a copy of Reagan's speech "The Creative Society."

III. SOURCES OF MATERIAL

The sources of material for this study fall into four categories: (1) those which discuss the definition of ethos, (2) those which discuss the definition of image and its use as a concept in contemporary politics, (3) those which furnish biographical material on Ronald Reagan; and (4) those which refer to the 1966 campaign organization and speaking situations.

Material on ethos includes most of the important works which discuss ethos. Included are Aristotle's Rhetoric, Lester Thonssen and A. Craig Baird's Speech Criticism, a summary of many of the common definitions of ethos, Richard Whately's Elements of Rhetoric, and W. Rhys Roberts' Greek Rhetoric and Literary Criticism. Articles in the Quarterly Journal of Speech and Speech Monographs which were concerned with ethos were also used.

Material on image includes dictionary definitions and Gene Wycoff's The Image Candidates.

Reagan's biography Where's the Rest of Me? and Bill Boyarsky's book The Rise of Ronald Reagan are the major sources of material on Reagan's life and career. Other material included articles from the New York Times and popular magazines.

Major sources for material on the campaign include Boyarsky's book, the Congressional Quarterly, and the New York Times.

IV. A METHOD OF ORGANIZATION

The following division represents the organization of this study:

I. Introduction.

This first chapter presents a justification for the study, the purpose and scope of the study, material used in writing this thesis, related studies, and a method of organization.

II. A Definition of Ethos and Image.

This chapter surveys materials of importance written on ethos, image, and political image, defines and briefly discusses each term in relation to this study.

III. Reagan's Image Before 1965.

Reagan's acting and speaking careers are covered as they developed in different periods of his life. This chapter also attempts to describe Reagan's personal image prior to the 1966 campaign.

IV. Reagan's Campaign Image.

This chapter discusses the political situation in California in 1966, the campaign, Reagan's speaking, and factors used in the campaign to develop Reagan's political image.

V. Conclusion.

A summary of the first four chapters of the thesis are covered with some reflections on the application of speaking to the building of a political image and the effectiveness of image politics.

CHAPTER II

ETHOS AND POLITICAL IMAGE

Robert Strunsky in his article, "The Cult of Personality," explains that ". . . the influence of personality is one of the most powerful and insistent forces in American life today."[1] Accompanying the extension of personality which Strunsky describes as a result of the increasing importance on public opinion of mass media is an increased use of the word "image."

The relationship between image and personality, while obvious, is difficult to define. Personality is defined as the visible aspect of character.[2] Image, more than this, includes all the things that one associates with a person. Character has a moral dimension image lacks.

The consciousness of image brought about by this new extension of personality affects contemporary political situations and has created a new emphasis on molding favorable mass media personalities for political candidates.

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[1]Robert Strunsky, "The Cult of Personality," The American Scholar, XXV (Summer, 1956), 266.

[2]The Random House Dictionary of the English Language, 1966.

A favorable media image tends to result in a more propitious "in person" appearance.

Image has been and is often used interchangeably with the word ethos. The purpose of this chapter is to define ethos, define image, and distinguish differences between the two terms, and finally to discuss the impact of image on political life.

I. ETHOS

It would seem most logical to first define the concept of ethos since, in contrast to the more recent origin of the concept of image, the etymological beginnings are of the Greek language and precede Aristotle. Some of the earlier developers of ethos were Corax and Tisias who conceived of ethos as primarily functioning in the context of the speech introduction or proem.[3]

The etymology of the word ethos must be analysed more fully to clearly understand the term. The word ethos has two origins: (1) ἔθος and (2) ἦθος. The relevant distinction between the two words for the province of rhetoric is that the first is morally neutral and refers

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[3]William M. Sattler, "Conceptions of Ethos in Ancient Rhetoric," Speech Monographs, XIV (1947), 55ff.

to behavioral traits.[4] The second, on the other hand, ". . . has connotations of right or wrong, virtue or vice, moral 'oughtness.'" Aristotle, following after Corax and Tisias, conceived of ἦθος as dealing with character. He also classified ethos as one of the three modes of proof and introduced the revolutionary idea that ethical proof permeates the whole of the speech and does not reside only in the introduction.[5]

Aristotle defined ethos in the following manner:

> Persuasion is achieved by the speaker's personal character [ἦθος] when the speech is so spoken as to make us think him credible. We believe good men more fully and more readily than others: this is true generally whatever the question is, and absolutely true where exact certainty is impossible and opinions are divided.[6]

The definition is restricted in that:

> This kind of persuasion, like the others, should be achieved by what the speaker says, not by what people think of this character before he begins to speak.[7]

Thonssen and Baird elaborate upon this restriction, writing that Aristotle confined the operational influence of ethical proof more than his successors:

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[4]Thomas E. Corts, "The Distinction of Ethos," Speech Monographs, XXXV (June, 1968), 202.

[5]Ibid., 57.

[6]W. Rhys Roberts (trans.), Rhetoric, in The Rhetoric and Poetic of Aristotle (New York: The Modern Library, 1954), 1356[a]

[7]Ibid.

> He insisted that the audience's antecedent conception of the speaker's character should not figure in the determination of the speaker's skill in establishing credibility through sagacity, high character, and good will. In other words what the speaker did during the speech was of primary concern; what people thought of him before he spoke was not in itself directly related to the modes of persuasion. This distinction is defensible, perhaps, if we conceive of ethical proof as an artistic creation brought by the speaker's skill in asserting his intelligence, revealing his probity, and accommodating himself to his hearers. It is, however, an artificial restriction, since the attitude of the audience toward the speaker--based upon previous knowledge of the latter's activities and reputation--cannot accurately be separated from the reaction the speaker induces through the medium of the speech.[8]

W. Rhys Roberts in Greek Rhetoric and Literary Criticism and William M. Sattler in "Conceptions of Ethos in Ancient Rhetoric," both make the strong Aristotelian distinction, artificial or not, that ethos must come from the speech alone.[9] However, Sattler, unlike Thonssen and Baird, or Roberts, indicates that ethos is expressed in choice, through invention, arrangement, style, and delivery.[10]

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[8] Lester Thonssen and A. Craig Baird, Speech Criticism (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1948), p. 385.

[9] W. Rhys Roberts, Greek Rhetoric and Literary Criticism (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., 1963), p. 26.

[10] Sattler, op. cit., 58.

Cicero follows Aristotle, and in the words of Thonssen and Baird, "adds little that is new."[11] Sattler gives him little credit either. According to him, Cicero indicated that ethos was associated with gentler, more usual, and habitual emotions while pathos referred to the stronger emotions. In De oratore, Cicero refers to ethos as morals, principles and conduct, or decorum.[12]

Both Thonssen and Baird, and Sattler agree that Quintilian also added little that was new. His main emphasis was on the good. Like Cicero, ethos took on the quality of decorum for Quintilian, and he associated it with the calm and mild emotions.[13]

In the 19th century ethos was defined as sympathy by both Whately and Campbell. Whately describes ethos as a heightened feeling instilled in the audience,[14] and Campbell defines it as ". . . the main engine by which the orator operates on the passions."[15] Thonssen and Baird quote Campbell as stating that as the speaker can

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[11]Thonssen, op. cit., p. 84.

[12]Sattler, op. cit., 61ff.

[13]Thonssen, op. cit., p. 92.

[14]Richard Whately, Elements of Rhetoric, ed. Douglas Ehninger (Carbondale, Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press, 1963), pp. 371-75.

[15]As cited in Thonssen, op. cit., p. 138.

arouse sympathy in his hearers for his purpose he will be convincing.[16]

None of these post-Aristotelian writers added much to what Aristotle had set down systematically as ethos, and our contemporary definitions generally reflect the definition which he used. For example, Irving J. Lee states that ". . . in the Aristotelian sense" ethos is "the moral states evidenced in the speech [my emphasis] . . . ."[17]

Thonssen and Baird write that ". . . ethos refers chiefly to what the speaker chooses to do. . ."[18] which does not necessarily confine the concept of ethos to the spoken word.

An equally broad, sweeping definition is given in Wieman and Walter's "Toward an Analysis of Ethics for Rhetoric." "Ethos may be defined as those aspects of the speaker himself that affect his belief making power."[19] This definition implies no restriction on the creation of ethos either. It may occur within or without the speech.

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[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid., p. 386.

[18] Thonssen, op. cit., 386.

[19] Henry Nelson Wieman and Otis M. Walter, "Toward an Analysis of Ethics for Rhetoric," Quarterly Journal of Speech, XLIII (October, 1957), 269.

Many writers feel the Aristotelian definition of ethos is outdated and unsatisfactory for our times. In a recent article Wayne Brockriede affirms that Aristotle was justified in restricting his definition, but he states that:

> . . . such a restriction is misleading today since audiences appear very much affected by the image [my emphasis] of authoritativeness and reliability which speakers have developed prior to any given discourse.[20]

Anderson and Clevenger agree with Brockriede. In their article "A Summary of Experimental Research in Ethos" they define ethos as "the image held of a communicator at a given time by a receiver--either one person or a group."[21] However, they introduce the concept of a dual ethos: one created within the speech and the other created outside the speech. They write:

> Extrinsic ethos is the image of the speaker as it exists prior to a given speech. Intrinsic ethos is the image derived from elements during the presentation of the speech consciously or unconsciously provided by the speaker. In real life speech situations, the final ethos is a product of the interaction of the extrinsic ethos and the intrinsic ethos.[22]

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[20] Wayne Brockriede, "Toward a Contemporary Aristotelian Theory of Rhetoric," Quarterly Journal of Speech, LII (February, 1966), 33ff.

[21] Kenneth Anderson and Theodore Clevenger, Jr., "A Summary of Experimental Research in Ethos," Speech Monographs, XXX (June, 1966), 60.

[22] Ibid., 69.

The latter, intrinsic ethos, appears to be close to the Aristotelian definition of ethos as part of the artistic proof of rhetoric. The former, extrinsic ethos, is equivalent to the inartistic proofs which Aristotle refers to as the previous reputation of the speaker. Both Anderson and Clevenger, and Brockriede seem to reflect some change which calls for an addition or expansion of the concept of ethos.

One of the best contemporary theorists, Paul Rosenthal, in his article on ethos entitled "The Concept of Ethos and the Structure of Persuasion" examines ethos in the light of more recent thinking in the general field of human communication.[23] He believes that ethos, properly considered, is not an element of the persuasive process but an end product of the combined logical and emotional responses; that is, a specific type of persuasion, in toto.[24] As he determines ethos, there are two potential foci in the speech for which the speaker can aim. There are two modes of persuasion, one which will dominate in any situation. Either the situation can be message oriented; that is, the subject matter, its development and the

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[23]Paul I. Rosenthal, "The Concept of Ethos and the Structure of Persuasion," Speech Monographs, XXXIII (June, 1966), 114.

[24]Ibid., 117.

policies entailed, or the situation may be oriented toward the total personality of the speaker.[25] In the latter circumstance, rather than concerning oneself with policies or arguments:

> . . . the listener may focus upon personal factors such as intelligence, appearance, and sincerity. When this occurs we say he is responding to the image [my emphasis] or, in traditional terminology, the ethos of the speaker.[26]

Rosenthal refers to these two modes of persuasion as personal or non-personal, image-oriented or message-oriented.

In summarizing, Rosenthal states that ethos refers to communication in which:

> (1) the persuasive effect is dominated by value response activated by the personality of the speaker as opposed to the content of the message and (2) the perception of the personality is derived from and conveyed by the whole rhetoric--the invention, arrangement, style, and delivery--the man speaking.[27]

Rosenthal's definition is better than the other definitions in the way it describes the nature and structure of ethos. Rosenthal describes a situational concept of ethos which retains the Aristotelian sense of what is rhetorical.

There are two trends in the more recent definitions of ethos. One trend expands the term to take in the factor

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[25] Ibid., 119. [26] Ibid. [27] Ibid., 120.

of previous reputation, or as Brockriede identifies it, speaker authoritativeness and reliability. The other trend keeps the traditional definition and seeks another term to define those other personal factors which affect the speaking situation.

The difficulty in expanding the concept of ethos is that it implies an expanded concept of rhetoric. Brockriede admits that Aristotle was justified in restricting his definition of ethos because a broader definition of ethos would have included other things not belonging to the province of rhetoric.

Rosenthal's definition will be used in this study because it expresses a conception of ethos which is situational while still keeping the Aristotelian sense of what is rhetorical. Rosenthal's definition becomes more personality oriented, and this is important in an election campaign where the man becomes the issue.

II. IMAGE

The words image and ethos are often used interchangeably. Rosenthal states "When this [focusing on personal factors] occurs we say he [the audience] is responding to the image or, in traditional terminology, the ethos of the speaker."

Image is not always defined as Rosenthal defines it. As one definition of image Webster's Third New International Dictionary lists:

> 5a, (2): a mental conception held in common by members of a group and being symbolic of a basic attitude and orientation toward something (as a person, class, racial type, political philosophy, or nationality) <the Frenchman's image of America.>[28]

This definition of image could apply loosely to ethos as well, in that the "image" held may be a result of ethos projected by a speaker. However, the image held may also be the result of factors other than ethos. In addition image seems to cover aspects of the speaking situation that do not directly depend on or originate from the art of rhetoric, such as the previous reputation of the speaker. Hence, image is a term with a broader province than ethos.

This interpretation seems to agree with Anderson and Clevenger. They present their definition of image in the following two sentences:

> Intended to explain many psychological functions, the congruity principle holds that an image (or meaning) depends upon the other concepts with which it is associated and this is subject to perpetual

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[28] Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged, 1967. This definition of image first appeared in the second edition of Webster's International Dictionary in 1935.

> change. Among the factors causing these variations are the successive parts of the speech.[29]

Thus Anderson and Clevenger, in this definition, as well as in their definition of extrinsic ethos, reinforce the idea that image is a broader term than ethos. They affirm that factors aside from the man speaking may affect the message conveyed.

Janis and Hovland contribute to an understanding of the breadth of the term image with a persuasive model indicating that attitude change is basically affected by four factors: (1) the content or message, which includes the content of the conclusions, the appeals, the arguments, and the stylistic features; (2) communicator characteristics such as the speaker's role, affiliations, and intentions; (3) media characteristics such as direct or indirect, newspapers, television, radio or billboards; and (4) situational surroundings such as the social setting or environmental setting.[30]

Ethos, as defined in this study, is created by the message and therefore would exist mostly because of the first factor. The other factors indirectly, but

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[29]Anderson, op. cit., 68.

[30]Carl I. Hovland and Irving L. Janis (eds.), Personality and Persuasibility (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1959), p. 4.

sometimes directly, create image. All of these factors, including the first, determine the image seen by the audience.

III. IMAGE IN POLITICS

The modern meaning of image reflects the new extension of personality by the mass media. David S. Broder, tracing the etymology of the word image, placed the origin of the modern meaning of the word in the early 1950's with the use of the term by Madison Avenue to make businesses aware of their corporate personalities.[31] Thus, the word has its beginning in the competition for the advertising dollar.

This modern concept of image calls for more study of the phenomenon of ethos and image. The phenomenon is nowhere more pronounced than in the field of politics. With the introduction of television this concept of image was readily adapted to politics and politicians. Richard Nixon was one of the first to realize the importance of a favorable image in the fifties.[32] Today the concept is so recognized that it is firmly entrenched in the modern campaign.

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[31] David S. Broder, "Year of the Image," New York Times Magazine, May 8, 1960, 68ff.

[32] Ibid.; also see Strunsky, op. cit., 271.

In the election campaign political image has now become a sophisticated tool for changing voter attitudes. Public relations firms have turned from creating corporate images to the field of politics, and they now manage many campaigns for state and local offices. For example:

> For a fee of six figures for a state contest . . . the free-lance image polishers will take over as much of the administrative work and thinking as the candidate will allow and pay for.[33]

This change in politicking is reflected in statements by our senators. Senator Clinton Anderson of New Mexico, well respected and a member of the Senate since 1948, says:

> Personal appeal is more important than record. People are not interested in issues, they are too complicated; they are interested in personalities, clean-cut, youthful, vigorous.[34]

This same feeling has been expressed by Senator Eugene McCarthy of Minnesota. He says: "Looks and personality take on a special importance as politics become less partisan and commitment to political program less important."[35]

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[33]"Charisma, Calluses and Cash," Time, LXXXVIII (October 14, 1966), 37ff.

[34]As cited in Lloyd Shearer, "In Today's World of the TV Image, Do Politicians Have to Be Good Looking?" The Albany [New York] Times Union, December 31, 1967, 5.

[35]As cited in Shearer, op. cit., 6.

Wayne C. Minnick reinforces the Senator's views when he writes that issues are too complex for the average person to understand. People pick their leaders on the only thing they feel competent to judge, their character, and therefore according to Minnick, the tendency "to rely on attractiveness of image rather than issues has grown."[36]

The trend toward an increased importance of political image could be expected with the increased size of society and the candidate's desire to find new means of expressing his views and having them recognized. This new mode of persuasion, image, or at least the intensification of a mode that has always been there, can be used by a candidate to gain recognition in a society that demands much in order to be moved. Whitehead writes:

> The advance of society . . . hinges on the growth of persuasive intercourse. The element of personality is a critical component of such intercourse since the appeal of reason is never fully controlling.[37]

Bertrand Russell argues that "Desires, emotions, passions (you can choose whichever you will) are the only possible causes of action. Reason is not a cause of action

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[36]Wayne C. Minnick, "Politics and the Ideal Man," Southern Speech Journal, XXIV (Fall, 1960), 16.

[37]As cited in Strunsky, op. cit., 269.

but only a regulator."[38] If true, Russell's argument places more stress on image as an emotional concept and makes it even more important to the candidate as a persuasive mode. Image becomes a major force of emotional response in people and determines degrees of admiration, respect and confidence. As Strunsky sees it:

> The current status of personality in the public mind and the intense preoccupation with its attendant rituals strongly suggest a basic alteration of its character: it appears to have lost something of its intrinsic quality of differentiation, to have taken on a collective aspect, and to have assumed the proportions of a popular cult. For whatever comfort it offers, its evolution may be viewed as a process of natural selection, an organic response to the challenge of its environment. For despite the social and technological forces exerted against it, the expression of personality remains the primary assertion of human existence, destined to resist containment and indefatigable in seeking its outlet.[39]

Thus, image can become the most important factor in an election campaign. In Ronald Reagan's campaign for governor in California in 1966, creation of an image became the principal strategy in his vote getting plans. Reagan's handling of important issues was matched to proper development of his image. The entire election deliberately or accidently turned on the image of Ronald

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[38] As cited in Edward Rogge, "Evaluating Ethics of a Speaker in a Democracy," Quarterly Journal of Speech, XLV (December, 1959), 424.

[39] Strunsky, op. cit., 272.

Reagan and the extremely sophisticated creation of his image in the political arena helped to assure a successful campaign.

IV. CONCLUSION

A survey of the important works on ethos has revealed a definition by Paul I. Rosenthal which is situational in its conception of ethos as used in contemporary speaking circumstances. The definition of ethos is one in which the speaker's personality dominates the situation and is a mode of persuasion in itself conveyed by the whole art of rhetoric.

Investigation of the concept of image traced it to Madison Avenue from which it has grown and been adapted by politicians to convert voters. The definition of image arrived at is one mainly activated by and projected through the man as seen by the voters and conveyed by all of the artistic means available both of rhetoric and of other arts.

It has also been noted that this mode or persuasion is by its very nature emotional and has utility in politics today.

CHAPTER III

REAGAN'S IMAGE BEFORE 1965

How Ronald Reagan was able with the help of his staff and advisors to develop a political image requires an examination of his background. The purpose of this chapter is to trace the development of his general philosophy and his careers as an actor and a public speaker. The chapter will be concerned with such visible aspects of Reagan's image and character as his qualities of intelligence or common sense, his honesty, his sincerity, his self confidence, and his general acceptance by his peers.

I. GENERAL PHILOSOPHY

Ronald Wilson Reagan was born on February 6, 1911, in the small Midwestern town of Tampico, Illinois. The small town of the 1920's was conservative, materialistic, filled with admiration of the businessman, and intolerant of government welfare, foreigners and dissenters.[1] Reagan's early years in a typical small town formed his basic attitudes toward life--attitudes which were to be set more firmly by the depression of the 1930's.

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[1]Bill Boyarsky, The Rise of Ronald Reagan (New York: Random House, 1968), p. 27.

The things that critics of the small town condemned were the same things that Reagan glorified and enthusiastically accepted:

> As a result, he is deeply respectful of business; determinedly conservative; mistrusting of change; unintellectual and slightly suspicious of higher education; firmly wedded to the Protestant religion of his boyhood; convinced that, as his father said, "all men are created equal and [that] man's own ambition determines what happens to him the rest of his life."[2]

In Reagan's words: "My existence turned into one of those rare Huck Finn-Tom Sawyer idylls . . . those were the days when I learned the real riches of rags."[3] These are the basic values that Reagan has held in high esteem throughout his life, and these values still affect his decisions and judgement as governor of California.

Another side of Reagan's character just as important to understanding the man is the sense of pride that Reagan has in his background. The Los Angeles Magazine called him "more American than Apple Pie."[4] Comments such as these mirror a man both patriotic and moral.

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[2] Ibid.

[3] "Presidential Preview-6: The Public Record of Ronald Reagan," Congressional Quarterly, XXV (July 28, 1967), 1307.

[4] Jim Murray, "Ronald Reagan to the Rescue," Esquire, LXV (February, 1966), 118.

Every action of the man's life, his complete style of life, points to the fact that the words accurately picture the man. This feeling is nowhere more apparent than in Reagan's autobiography. Throughout the book he continually admits that he is often a bit naive about things of the world, and at times approaches problems and issues with a point of view that is embarrassingly simplistic. From this viewpoint comes his dictum that there are no easy answers but there are simple ones.[5]

The young Reagan learned early that money was hard earned. His father, a shoe salesman, made little money, and the family had many hard times. At the age of fourteen Ronald worked for a contractor during the summer. He found it tiresome and uninteresting and the next summer he was glad to find a job at Lowell Park as a lifeguard. He held this job until the summer following his graduation from Eureka College. From his summer job he saved two hundred dollars each year for college. While at Eureka Reagan washed dishes and coached swimming to earn his room and board.

In both high school and college Reagan was only an average student. He relates that he was an indifferent

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[5] Ronald Reagan and Richard Hubler, Where's the Rest of Me? (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1965).

student whose main concern was retaining eligibility for the football team.[6] He explains that he took up Economics and Sociology as majors at Eureka because they gave him time for sports and dramatics.[7] B. J. Fraser, one of Reagan's teachers, relates that at Dixon High School Reagan was interested in literature and English, was above average in intelligence, curious, original and creative, and unlike other students "he did what he started."[8] Reagan's brother, Neil, claimed that as a student, Ronnie only needed to read a book once as he had "a truly photographic memory . . . ."[9]

Reagan was also a leader in school. In both high school and college he was student body president. In 1928 the president of Eureka reduced the pay of professors in order to decrease overhead costs. The students asked for the president's resignation and partial restoration of faculty salaries. When the students' demands were not met and they decided to strike, Reagan was the likely spokesman for the freshman class. His motion to strike aroused the audience of students and faculty to a favorable

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[6] Ibid., p. 24.

[7] "Ronald Reagan," Current Biography (1949), 503.

[8] As cited in Boyarsky, op. cit., p. 36.

[9] Ibid.

voice vote, and Reagan had his first real feel for the responsiveness of an audience.[10] The president resigned.

Reagan, in referring to his college days, admits that he graduated from Eureka with an education centered in experience rather than scholarship. He participated in a great many of the extra-curricular activities. The goal of education, he believed then as now, is the gaining of wisdom which is not entirely acquired from the classroom.

In 1932 Reagan joined the staff of WHO radio in Des Moines, Iowa, as a part-time football announcer. While with the station he learned to improvise, gained commercial experience, and perfected his speaking ability.[11] Reagan's coverage of major league baseball, Big Ten football, and other major sports events brought him to national attention as an announcer.[12]

While working for WHO Reagan gave talks at father-son banquets, at service clubs and wrote guest columns for newspapers. Republican Congressman H. R. Gross, a former announcer at WHO, says "that even in those days

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[10]There are accounts of the incident in The New York Times, 1928; Boyarsky's book; and in Reagan's autobiography. It seems that there was another reason for the strike. There was animosity among the students toward the president who had banned dancing and smoking.

[11]Boyarsky, op. cit., p. 57.

[12]Current Biography (1949), 503.

Reagan loved to give speeches." Gross also remembers that Reagan, then as now, closed his speeches with a strong appeal for morality.[13]

At this time Reagan's father was employed by the government to find temporary work for those unemployed as a result of the depression. There came a day when the unemployed men told him they were unable to take a short job or their welfare money would be stopped--"All because they had done a few days' honest work."[14] This experience taught Reagan a lesson about what he would later consider one of the troubles with government service.[15]

Another incident which happened while Reagan was in the army was also to have an effect in molding his general philosophy which would soon be tending toward conservatism. Near the end of the war his motion picture unit was assigned a number of civilians. Among those assigned was a secretary for the then Captain Reagan. The secretary proved to be very inefficient, but Reagan found that in order to get her fired, he would have to testify in court to her incompetence or, as was the more usual procedure, upgrade and transfer her. Reagan

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[13]As cited in Boyarsky, op. cit., p. 59.

[14]Reagan and Hubler, op. cit., p. 53.

[15]Ibid.

exclaimed that this was a "built-in process for empire building."[16]

II. REAGAN'S ACTING CAREER

From his earliest years acting was one of the main interests in Ronald Reagan's life. He was often exposed to excitement of the theatre when his mother and father invited the local amateur theatre group to rehearse in their home. Reagan expressed his attitude toward the fantasy world of acting in these lines from his autobiography: "I regard acting with the greatest affection; it has made my life for me. But I realize it tends to become an island of exaggerated importance."[17]

B. J. Fraser, Reagan's first dramatics teacher at Dixon High School in Dixon, Illinois, remarked that he thought that the young Reagan "had possibilities" as an actor, but in the Midwest in those days it was unheard of for anyone to go into the theatre as a career.[18] Reagan praised Fraser and credits him with teaching him most of what he knows about acting. He says "Fraser had the knack of quietly leading us into a performance, of making us think out roles instead of acting them out

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[16] Ibid., p. 125. [17] Ibid., p. 6.

[18] As cited in Boyarsky, op. cit., p. 36.

mechanically."[19] Similar remarks by Reagan later would tend to indicate that his acting was primarily method acting.

Reagan continued his acting in college under the direction of Miss Ellen Johnston, who helped to make him as ". . . convincing on the stage as he was when giving a strike speech in the chapel."[20] In college Reagan was competent enough as an actor to win one of the individual acting awards when his troupe was chosen to participate in one-act play competition at Northwestern University.

Several years later, in 1937, while covering spring training with the Chicago Cubs for WHO, Reagan's interests were diverted to his old love--acting. A radio friend had arranged an interview for him with Warner Studios and within a week he had signed a contract which paid him two hundred dollars per week.

For several years Reagan made only "B" movies but in 1940-41 he was chosen in an exhibitor's poll as one of the young actors most likely to emerge a star.[21] His performance in 1942 in King's Row was acclaimed by the New York Herald Tribune, The New Yorker and Commonweal

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[19]Reagan and Hubler, op. cit., p. 38.

[20]Boyarsky, op. cit., p. 50.

[21]Current Biography (1949), 503.

magazine. In later pictures he usually portrayed the hero's sidekick or the guy who failed to get the girl, and his ". . . 'typically American' appearance made him a favorite of motion picture audiences."[22] He continued in these "good guy" roles appearing in over fifty films from 1937 to 1964, the year of his last film.

During the Second World War Reagan produced training films for the army. He was promoted from second lieutenant in the reserve cavalry in Des Moines, to captain and later major. He refused the latter rank, claiming that his line of work did not merit this honor.[23]

Following the war Reagan was elected to the board of directors of the Screen Actor's Guild. In this post Reagan worked diligently to protect the rights of the members of the guild in labor disputes and to protect the guild from the infiltration of communism. His hard work, sense of fair play and thoroughness in settling disputes made him the choice for president following Robert Montgomery's resignation in 1946. Reagan served successfully in this capacity for six additional terms.

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[22]"Ronald Reagan," Current Biography (1967), 339.

[23]George H. Smith, Who is Ronald Reagan? (New York: Pyramid Books, 1968), p. 60.

In 1949 Reagan, as president, sought a new respect for the residents of Hollywood, while at the same time he initiated a policy to purge the "scum fringe" from the industry. Movie stars were under extreme fire for their escapades from newspaper columnists such as Hedda Hopper. Reagan, also chairman of the Motion Picture Industries Council, asked the American people to take a second look at the people of Hollywood. "Why not bring out," Reagan said, "that this community consists . . . of hard-working, church-going family men and women who rarely if ever break into the headlines . . . ?"[24]

In the early fifties Reagan worked for such goals as increased wages for actors, residuals from old movies shown on television, and more jobs for Negroes in the motion picture industry.[25]

During this period Reagan was a political liberal and several times found himself in organizations which proved to be infiltrated with fellow travelers. Because of these affiliations Reagan was labeled as a communist by some opponents in the unions, but a searching scrutiny during the 1966 gubernatorial campaign proved that he had never knowingly joined a communist front organization.

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[24] New York Times, October 30, 1949.

[25] New York Times, November 10, 1952.

The real Reagan was beginning to emerge at this time. Boyarsky states:

> His later opponents would do well to study his record in those post-war years, for it shows him to have been a knowledgeable and articulate spokesman for his point of view. He was in the middle of day-to-day battles and testified at length before congressional committees. His basic political instincts were sharpened during this period, and he emerged from it a battle-hardened and polished advocate of the conservative cause.[26]

Reagan's shift to conservatism during the late forties and early fifties was not unpredictable. He had never changed his basic political philosophy, but his positions as president of the SAG and MPIC had simply caused him to become more aware of the realities of politics.

When his early movie career waned in the early fifties Reagan began to search for new opportunities. The opening came in 1954 when General Electric offered him 125,000 dollars to serve as host for <u>General Electric Theatre</u>. Reagan's contract as host for the television show called for half a dozen acting performances a year and a personal appearance tour in GE's extensive Employee and Community Relations Program. In this capacity he was responsible for selling GE products, helping to build the company's corporate image and visiting GE plants to improve employee morale. In this position Reagan not only gained

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[26]Boyarsky, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 76.

valuable experience, but GE Theatre was one of the most popular television shows viewed until competition from Bonanza forced its cancellation in 1962.[27]

After the cancellation of GE Theatre Reagan continued in television as host for Death Valley Days. As host for both shows he learned the effectiveness of proper use of the television media and became familiar and popular to the American public.

Everyone was familiar with Reagan as an actor but, until 1964, they failed to associate him with politics although he had for many years been involved in small roles in political campaigns. In 1951 he had campaigned for liberal Democratic Senator Helen G. Douglas in her controversial race with Richard Nixon. In 1952 and in 1956 he campaigned for Dwight Eisenhower. In 1960 he spoke for Richard Nixon and in 1962 he worked hard for the election to Congress of Republican John Rousselot, a member of the John Birch Society. In 1962 Reagan formally changed his political party affiliation to Republican. In 1964 Reagan politically became nationally known while serving as co-chairman of the California for Goldwater-Miller campaign.

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[27] Ibid., p. 102.

Reagan's speech for Goldwater on national television, a fund raising speech that raised more money than any fund raising speech in history, began the development of his political image.[28] With this speech Reagan awakened in conservatives and others the idea that he might possess a degree of competence in the political world.[29]

III. REAGAN AS A SPEAKER

Reagan was not unfamiliar with the art of public speaking. He had started speaking while in college. Boyarsky writes that, in addition to the strike speech, Reagan also spoke occasionally before fraternity groups or other unmomentous gatherings.[30] As a radio announcer in the thirties he spoke on the banquet circuit.

No record exists of Reagan speaking politically before the war. However, a speech given at the San Fernando YMCA is typical of his speaking during this time. The speech dealt with the value of "clean sportsmanship, health rules, and the importance of team play."[31] After the war Reagan decided he would ". . . try to bring about the regeneration of the world" with his

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[28]"Ronald Reagan," Current Biography (1967), 338.

[29]Boyarsky, op. cit., p. 105.

[30]Ibid., p. 49.

[31]Ibid., pp. 63-4.

talents, his thoughts, his speaking ability, and his reputation as an actor.[32]

Reagan's first efforts toward changing the world were on what he called the "rubber-chicken and glass-tinkling" circuits. His audiences, mostly liberals, mostly veterans, were given the kind of speech they wanted to hear and the kind of speech Reagan then felt to be important--an energetic pitch against Fascism. One evening in the spring of 1946, a minister asked Reagan why he did not include an attack on communism in his speech. Reagan thought this a good idea, but he learned that many of his liberal friends were not as anti-communistic as he thought, and his audiences did not always favorably react to his speech.[33] The situation was new to Reagan. Unlike acting, it entailed more than just pleasing an audience. This particular speech shocked the audience and caused many people to think, and Reagan found the new audience reaction so disturbing that for a period of time he cancelled speaking engagements.[34]

But only two years later, Reagan, looking like "a sedate business-man" spoke before a Rotary club in Los Angeles. His speech now included his experiences

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[32]Reagan and Hubler, op. cit., p. 140.

[33]Ibid., pp. 141-2. [34]Ibid.

as president of the Screen Actor's Guild in trying to subdue communist infiltration of the movie industry. "We are for the free-enterprise system . . ." he said. "We are against statism. We have fought our little Red brothers all along the line."[35] The cold war had begun, and Reagan was again espousing ideas that most of the people found appealing.

Reagan also gained speaking experience before a different kind of audience. In 1947, in the aftermath of the Hollywood strikes, described by Reagan as the worst the Guild had gone through,[36] he was asked to testify before the House Committee on Un-American Activities and a special sub-committee on Education and Labor, headed by the late Carroll Kearns. Testimony from the hearings show Reagan's genuine concern for his fellow actors and his straight-thinking, simplistic approach to problems:

> We again found ourselves with the prospect of actors that were going to be unemployed by reason of the slow-down in production . . . . I suggested that it was about time we forgot the rules and regulations and red tape and go back to the town hall meeting idea, that the guild take the lead and try to get all of the leading parties to sit down at a table in one room and hammer this out . . . instead of talking through the newspapers.[37]

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[35]Boyarsky, op. cit., p. 75.

[36]Reagan and Hubler, op. cit., p. 192.

[37]Boyarsky, op. cit., p. 80.

His testimony was clear and concise. In reply to a question about the cliques that were using communistic tactics in the strikes he gave the following reply:

> I would say of those people that the best thing to do is make democracy work. In the Screen Actor's Guild we make it work by insuring everyone a vote and by keeping everyone informed. I believe that, as Thomas Jefferson put it, if all the American people know all the facts they will never make a mistake. Whether the party should be outlawed, I agree with the gentleman who preceded me that it is a matter for the government to decide.[38]

The "Founding Fathers'" philosophy, mixed with that of the New England Town meeting, were to be typical of the manner in which Reagan would approach answers to problems during his campaign. In the 1966 campaign he would, in the same way, field all questions thrown at him in the question-answer period with ease. It is in this way that he conveys a sense of his own assurance and sounds very competent.

Reagan found himself in other speaking situations. On January 13, 1948, he spoke to the students of the University of California at Los Angeles on the plight of the members of the Screen Actor's Guild. Only 600 of 8500 members were under contract, he told them, the largest number of unemployed of any industry in the

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[38] Ibid., p. 86.

country. Reagan's solution called for more theatres in order that more films could be made and shown.[39]

In another speech, as master of ceremonies for the "Hollywood Award," Reagan, the president of the SAG, felt that he had a duty to perform. After appropriate introductory remarks he unleashed a diatribe against the "irresponsible press." He charged that columnists, such as Hedda Hopper, and newspapers such as the Los Angeles Daily News and the Los Angeles Times had distorted beyond all proportion the actions of the citizens of Hollywood. No columnist answered Reagan's attack, although had they Reagan's reputation might have been hurt. Time called him either a very brave man or a very foolish one.[40] Possibly Reagan's reputation for honesty and sincerity was the reason that he was not attacked for his statements.

In Reagan's eight years with General Electric as a touring speaker, he spoke to 250,000 people, both employees and executives, and visited 125 of 135 plants. Better than any barnstorming politician, his tours provided him with the opportunity to meet the people who represented a large cross-section of the country.[41] On his visits

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[39] New York Times, January 13, 1948.

[40] "Hollywood Award," Time, LVII (February 26, 1951), 56.

[41] Reagan and Hubler, op. cit., p. 259, 261.

he usually walked through the plants, stopping at different points to deliver a twenty minute talk. According to Reagan the twenty minute talk was "a brief greeting and explanation of why I was there, which of necessity had to be fairly pat, followed by a 'free-wheeling' question and answer period."[42] He met with local officials and executives for luncheons and dinners, usually speaking afterward. In these after dinner speeches he first tried to better relations with Hollywood by telling the executives what the actor's community was like. Next, he developed his theme of communist infiltration into the film industry unions and warned that as citizens they should not be complacent but should be active, interested participants in government.

Typical of Reagan's talks at this time was a speech before the Executives Club in Chicago in May of 1958. Boyarsky reports that Reagan discussed:

> . . . the troubles of the movie industry and concluded with a rousing attack on the government. Censorship, high taxes and government harrassment had been wrecking the movies because the studio chiefs had let "the planners and regulators get a foot in the door. This superstructure of government imposed on our original form is composed of bureaus and departments and is unchanged by any election," he said. This hierarchy threatens to reverse the relationship of citizen and civil servant.[43]

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[42] Ibid., p. 265.

[43] Boyarsky, op. cit., p. 100.

The main theme running through his speeches of this period, and seemingly unchanged today, is that we are slowly losing individual freedoms to big government, that we should not sit back but should see what is happening to our liberties.

Reagan states that during the fifties and early sixties his speaking was undergoing an evolution. Reflected in this change were his changing political outlook and the increasing size of the federal government. In Reagan's words:

> The Hollywood portion of the talk shortened and disappeared. The warning words of what could happen changed to concrete examples of what has already happened, and I learned very early to document these examples.[44]

Time magazine in reporting on a Reagan speech in Whittier, California, made reference to his appearance. In describing him the article stated: "Boyish of face, gleaming of tooth, Ronald Reagan earned a reputation among movie goers as a pleasant man in white ducks, whose deepest thought was reserved for the next dance."[45]

A speech given before the Orange County California Press Club seems typical of Reagan's speaking for GE in 1961. He called it "The Speech" and titled this

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[44]Reagan and Hubler, op. cit., p. 266.

[45]"Too Many People . . .," Time, LXXVII (April 21, 1961), 19.

version of it "Encroaching Control: Keep Government Poor and Remain Free."[46]

The introduction was an attempt to correct the image of actors held by most people and suggested that actors were responsible citizens. Reagan said:

> It must seem presumptuous to some of you for a member of my profession to stand up here and attempt to talk on problems of the nation. It would be strange if it were otherwise. We in Hollywood are not unaware of the concept many of our fellow citizens have of us and of our industry. We realize that our merchandise is made up of tinsel, colored lights and a large measure of make-believe. It is also true that our business methods and practices have reflected this footlight glamour more than the real side of our very real business.[47]

Having established his qualifications and built his ethos, he proceeded to cite in support of his thesis, more than eighty statistics and forty-five examples.

Reagan's topics were related to the need to recognize the communist threat as a real danger, the need to realize that the communists can accomplish their purpose by slow erosion of our democratic principles, and the need to understand that big government is robbing us of our individual freedoms.

Reagan's first example, a familiar one, concerns the communist threat in the Hollywood unions. In using

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[46] Vital Speeches, XXVII (September 1, 1961), 677-80.

[47] Ibid.

this illustration he spoke of himself and Hollywood as "we." Near the end of the example the pronoun comes to mean "we the people of this country" and in his next point he emphasized that because of the cold war ". . . we are at war. . . ."[48] In amplifying this theme Reagan quoted Lenin, Marx, Bulganin and Nikita Krushchev to illustrate Russia's desire for world domination.

Neither should we assist the communists by accepting socialism in small doses. Reagan quoted James Madison: "Since the general Civilization of mankind, I believe there are more instances of the abridgement of the freedom of the people by gradual encroachment of those powers than by violent and sudden usurpation."[49]

The bulk of the speech elaborated with examples and statistics the theme of growing socialism, big government and tax money taken from the working man's pocket. The big fear expressed in the speech was that "the foot was in the door" for many harmful measures and an urgency existed concerning affairs of state. Reagan concluded by suggesting that the listeners write their Senators and Congressmen demanding action.

Reagan's presentation of facts, examples, and statistics together with his reference to the Founding

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[48] Ibid.

[49] Ibid.

Fathers, indicated to his listeners a self-confidence and mastery of his subject matter. Reagan's delivery with little reference to notes added to this effect. His seeming concern for the country and his reference to "us" or "you and I" having problems together, helped to build an apparently strong ethical appeal.

Throughout the speech Reagan presented himself as being concerned with the public's problems and as being the type of individual they could rely on to tell them the truth about the country's problems.

It was natural that Reagan, an avid supporter of the Goldwater campaign in California,[50] should escort his candidate when Goldwater came to California on May 29, 1964. Reagan's introductions left little doubt that he was becoming upset with some of his fellow Republicans. The New York Times reported the rather bitter note he struck for Goldwater that day:

> Ronald Reagan, the youthful looking former Hollywood actor [who] has moved to the right wing of the political stage, today opened a rally for Mr. Goldwater with the words: "And good morning to all you irresponsible Republicans." Mr. Reagan, a fixed smile never leaving his face, said there were two ways to introduce the Arizona Senator. One was as the true voice of Republicanism.[51]

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[50] New York Times, September 15, 1964.

[51] New York Times, May 30, 1964.

As one of Goldwater's most active supporters, and probably one of his best speakers,[52] Reagan was the logical choice to make a last minute fund-raising appeal on October 27, 1964. On that evening Reagan delivered on nationwide television his speech "A Time for Choosing" which is rumored to have changed thousands of votes and to have drawn as much as 750,000 dollars in contributions.[53] The news media did not give the speech much immediate praise, but in the weeks following the November Democratic victory Reagan became one of the brightest lights in the Republican party.[54] With Reagan's announcement in January, 1966, that he would seek the Governorship of California most commentators considered this speech the turning point for Reagan's political career.

James Todd Hayes makes the statement that "A Time for Choosing" was simply one more performance of a speech Reagan had given many times.[55] Life magazine and the New York Times make the same statement. Actually the

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[52]Boyarsky, op. cit., p. 104.

[53]"Presidential Preview," op. cit., 1308.

[54]"Ronald Reagan, A Light in the West," National Review, XVIII (June 28, 1966), 613.

[55]"Ronald Reagan as a 'Thoughtful' Speaker--The Sources of Evidence for Selected Assertions from his Campaign Speech of October 27, 1964," (unpublished Master's thesis, Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, 1965), p. 12.

statement is not true. Although some of the themes were the same ones Reagan had used in earlier speeches the fund raising speech was different. Compared with the Orange County California Press Club address of 1961, typical of "The Speech," "A Time for Choosing" was quite different.

The principal difference lay in the fact that this particular address, on coast-to-coast television, was more general than "The Speech" but not as general as the speeches he would deliver in the campaign. The latter speech seemed to have few of the same examples found in the earlier renditions of "The Speech." Only three examples, out of the more than forty-five used in the 1961 speech, were used in the 1964 speech.

The 1964 speech used approximately forty-five statistics and figures, about one-half of the number in the 1961 speech. In 1964 more references, including one to Alexander Hamilton, were made to the Founding Fathers. Even the emphasis of the attack on communism, socialism and big government changed from a non-partisan approach, concerned with the public, to a subtle attack on the Democratic party as the cause of "our" problems.

Reagan discussed the danger of deficit spending in government, the fact that we must fight if necessary to preserve freedom equated with Goldwater's slogan of

"Peace Through Strength," and the danger of increasing government control (in which he elaborated on the growth of the agriculture program, the poverty program, urban renewal, increased welfare, Social Security, foreign aid, and socialism). Above all he portrayed Barry Goldwater as a kind, considerate and sensible man who could provide leadership for the country. In the 1964 speech, as in 1961, Reagan made the same appeals to develop his ethos. He presented himself in a common sense way which tends to be simple and to the point; confident in argument and facts; competent and sensible; honest and sincere; a seeker of truth as well as a champion of the people's rights.

Boyarsky states:

> This time [1964] he borrowed a line from Franklin Roosevelt and used it to emphasize his conservative message of desperation and despair. "You and I have a rendezvous with destiny. We will preserve for our children this, the last step for man on earth, or will we sentence them to take the last step into a thousand years of darkness." The speech was to conservatives what Bryan's "Cross of Gold" speech had been to the farmers and workers of the Democratic party in 1896, a rallying point, a promise of hope for the future.[56]

This half-hour speech had an immediate effect on the audience. Hayes, in the body of his thesis, marked a text of the speech in those places where Reagan paused

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[56]Boyarsky, op. cit., p. 105.

for laughter or applause or both.[57] Reagan stopped fifteen times for laughter or applause, the first pause coming about eight minutes into the speech. Reagan said:

> They've just declared Rice County, Kansas, a depressed area. Rice County, Kansas, has two hundred oil wells, and the 14,000 people there have over thirty million dollars in deposit in personal savings in their banks.[58]

The audience reacted to similar revelations of the absurdity of federal bureacracy. Statements about the honor and honesty of Barry Goldwater also drew great applause. Reaction of the viewing audience can be judged by the fact that hundreds of thousands of dollars were raised for the party.

IV. CONCLUSION

Thus was the personal image of Ronald Reagan developed. As a student he was an all-around boy, active and well-liked. As a radio announcer he was successful. As an actor, while no super-star, he was popular with movie-goers of the country. As a speaker Reagan was also popular. When his contract with General Electric was cancelled the company had to drop speaking engagements booked four years in advance.

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[57] Hayes, op. cit., pp. 24-41.

[58] All references to the text of "A Time for Choosing" are from the Hayes thesis.

Those who lived and worked in Hollywood saw and respected a different side of Reagan; a man who spent long, arduous hours as president of the Screen Actor's Guild making their careers more prosperous and their working conditions more satisfactory. When he resigned as president in 1952 he received a gold, life membership card in the Guild and a life time place on the board of directors. When the Guild was threatened by crippling strikes again in 1959, Reagan was asked to resume the SAG presidency for a year and settle the disputes--a tribute to his leadership.

Therefore, Ronald Reagan did have a successful personal image of leadership when he entered the world of serious politics.

CHAPTER IV

THE 1966 CAMPAIGN: THE POLITICS AND THE IMAGE

In any campaign there are those factors which are controllable and those which can only be predicted. In a campaign the situational factors such as the nature of a state fall into the latter category. Factors such as those of image fall into the former category. The purpose of this chapter is to describe the climate of California politics in the election of 1966, to describe Reagan's speaking during that campaign--emphasizing the effect of two of his major speeches in developing his image, and finally to describe the other factors which contributed to developing Reagan's image.

I. CALIFORNIA AND THE ELECTION OF 1966

That this campaign occurred in California is reason enough for it to emphasize "image politics." Two factors are unique to California's political situation: the so-called "star system," and the affluence of the voters. The "star system" has been described as a formless piece of political machinery with no power of its own,[1] and is

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[1]Oulahan, op. cit., 74.

believed to have had its origin in the political maneuvering of Hiram Johnson, Governor of California in 1908.[2] In his attempt to break the power of the railroad barons Johnson had statutes enacted which weakened the traditional party control between state and county. The system included "prohibition of pre-primary endorsement by political parties,. . . non-partisan local elections,. . . almost complete elimination of patronage,. . . and a cross-filing system which permitted a candidate to enter the primaries of both parties."[3] As a result the Democrats were kept from power until 1958. Only then was the cross-filing system abolished. According to Stephen Hess and David Broder in The Republican Establishment, "By ordaining that local office be non-partisan and by encouraging cross-filing for partisan posts, he [Johnson] weakened the office-holders' and voters' loyalty to the ticket."[4] With this lack of party control California is more likely to have campaigns that are candidate rather than issue oriented.

In his book, The Image Candidates, Gene Wycoff writes that:

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[2]Smith, op. cit., pp. 77-8.

[3]Ibid., p. 77ff.

[4]As cited in Smith, op. cit., p. 79.

> . . . the increasing incidence of conversion [of voters] by image candidates may be as much due to weakening alignments of voters with political parties as to the unique and pervasive ability of television to convey image differences.[5]

The erosion of California's party controls is more pronounced than elsewhere in the country and Californians therefore become more susceptible to image politics.

The second unique factor in California politics is that:

> . . . -Californians, by and large, are prosperous beyond precedent. The basic indices--production, employment, wages--are at record levels; migration into the state continues. . . The politicians' traditional shadow play of a Promised Land becomes an exercise in lily-gilding and there's nowhere for people or politicians to turn except to carping.[6]

California is wealthy; it rates fifth on a budget scale with nations of the world. But to say that Californians automatically turn to carping is misleading because there remain many policy issues which are of great concern to the voters.

Many Californians, with newly acquired status and wealth, are overly concerned with taxes and have tended to become conservative. In an article in the National Review Ronald Reagan expressed the view of most of the workers of California:

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[5]Wycoff, op. cit., p. 221.

[6]Gladwin Hill, "Barbecues and Other Trivia," Nation, CCIII (October 17, 1966), 377.

> In short the time has come for the soft-sell to prove our radicalism was an optical illusion. We represent the forgotten American--that simple soul who goes to work, bucks for a raise, takes out insurance, pays for his kids' schooling, contributes to his church and charity and knows there ain't no such thing as free lunch.[7]

This is California on the eve of the election: a state that had accepted the conservative Nixon in 1960, but voted for Thomas Kuchel in 1962 and Lyndon Johnson in 1964. In state politics the voters of California had given Governor Edmund [Pat] Brown two sweeping victories. In 1958 he defeated Senator William Knowland by one million votes, and in 1962 he defeated Richard Nixon by 300,000 votes. He was a man with a good record in office: he had begun construction of a great water project for California; he had inaugurated a master plan for state higher education; he had campaigned for bond issues to build new campuses, prisons, and mental hospitals; he had fought a losing battle on proposition fourteen nullifying the open housing law; and he had signed the state's first fair employment practices act in 1959.[8] In the 1962 campaign Nixon had found in Brown's record few things

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[7]Ronald Reagan, "Republican Party and the Conservative Movement," National Review, XVI (December 1, 1964), 1055.

[8]Boyarsky, op. cit., p. 115.

to attack. Even in 1966 many felt that Brown had run an efficient government during his two terms in office.[9]

Ronald Reagan, on the other hand, had little political reputation and could be attacked on his lack of experience, his extremist associations, and his conservative philosophy. Reagan had been asked to run for governor following the 1964 speech, but it was several months later before he gave his approval to a group of wealthy Southern California conservatives to start an organization called "The Friends of Reagan."

Early in June of 1965, this group contributed 100,000 dollars to hire Spencer-Roberts and Associates to conduct a strawpoll of the state to see if there was sufficient support for Reagan in all sectors of the Republican party. Chuck Conners, Walt Disney, John Wayne and other Hollywood personalities added their support. In the polls, however, Reagan was not doing well early in 1965.

The California poll of February 11, 1965, asked Republican voters who they thought would make at least

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[9]Robert D. Kully, "The 1962 California Gubernatorial Campaign: The 'New' Brown," Western Speech, XXX (Spring, 1966), 116-17.

a fair candidate for the Republican Party, with the following results:[10]

Thomas Kuchel	86%	Max Rafferty	62%
George Christopher	83%	Ronald Reagan	61%

By August Reagan had found the support he sought in all portions of the party.[11] His standing among Republicans was rising during these months, but in the first official poll of all voters he was trailing everyone against Brown. The August 11, 1965, poll predicted the following results of different Republican candidates against Brown:[12]

Thomas Kuchel	56%	Brown	31%	Undecided	13%
George Murphy	49%	"	38%	"	13%
George Christopher	48%	"	37%	"	15%
Ronald Reagan	46%	"	41%	"	13%

Polling only Republicans the Los Angeles Times poll of September 12, 1965, showed Reagan leading both of his opponents at this time for the June, 1966 primary:[13]

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[10]"Political Notes: California," Congressional Quarterly, XXIII (February 19, 1965), 274. All references to the Congressional Quarterly are from the section titled "Political Notes: California," unless stated.

[11]Shana Alexander, "Ronald Reagan for Governor?" Life, LIX (August 13, 1965), 22.

[12]Congressional Quarterly, XXIII (August 20, 1965), 1660.

[13]Congressional Quarterly, XXIII (September 24, 1965), 1938.

Reagan	34.2%
Kuchel	20.6%
Christopher	15.9%

In a poll of September 14, 1965, all of the Republican candidates were shown leading the Democratic candidate Brown.

On September 20, 1965, Senator Thomas Kuchel withdrew as a possible candidate but warned Republicans to avoid extremism and to unite behind a moderate candidate. Four days later Reagan announced he was "not going to solicit" support from the John Birch Society and said that it was infiltrated by a kind of "lunatic fringe."[14]

In early November Professor Leo E. Litwak of San Francisco State College wrote that Reagan's support was becoming quite broad-based. Reagan, he said, had supporters of Goldwater, Rockefeller, Kuchel, Eisenhower and Nixon working for him.[15] It was also observed that conservative factions were solidifying behind Reagan.[16]

On December 10, 1965, John Luce, an assistant of Brown, listened to Reagan speak at the San Mateo County Chamber of Commerce luncheon, and he reported to the

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[14]"Presidential Preview," op. cit., 1308.

[15]New York Times, November 14, 1965.

[16]"Presidential Preview," op. cit., 1309.

Governor that Reagan would fall apart in the heat of a campaign.

On January 4, 1966, Reagan announced his candidacy with a statement that the issues of the campaign were to be crime, high welfare costs, and unrest at the University of California at Berkeley. At this time the Congressional Quarterly made several observations: (1) Brown had to work with the different factions of the Democratic party which posed a handicap for him; (2) Reagan had wide factions to unite within the Republican party but was already projecting a more moderate image; and (3) Reagan's views forecast another Goldwater-type campaign in California and this spelled defeat.[17] William F. Buckley, however, wrote that Reagan was doing well and was surprising most of the "political pros" by his performance. Buckley reported that Reagan was going about the state smiling, saying nothing but good things about his opponents,[18] and obeying Parkinson's [GOP state chairman] law that "thou shalt not speak ill of other Republicans."[19]

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[17] Congressional Quarterly, XXIV (January 28, 1966), 316-17.

[18] William F. Buckley, "How is Ronald Reagan Doing?" National Review, XVIII (January 11, 1966), 17.

[19] "Parkinson's Law," Time, LXXXVII (May 27, 1966), 20.

The Los Angeles Times poll of January 16, 1966, showed Reagan gaining support. Among Republicans he led Christopher 53.3 per cent to 35.1 per cent. Among all voters the poll reported:[20]

Brown	42.4%	Reagan	46.8%	Undecided	11%
"	35.2%	Christopher	50.3%	"	14%

In February, 1966, Kuchel endorsed Christopher which caused conservative support to polarize about Reagan and encouraged moderate and liberal Republicans to support Christopher. The Kelvin Fields' California Poll reflected Kuchel's endorsement:

Christopher	42%
Reagan	43%
Undecided	14%

The February 18 poll of all voters showed:[21]

Christopher	45%	Brown	37%	Undecided	16%
Reagan	40%	"	44%	"	14%

The April California poll saw more of the undecided votes leaning to Christopher with no change in the Brown-Reagan match.[22]

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[20] Congressional Quarterly, XXIV (January 28, 1966), 316.

[21] Congressional Quarterly, XXIV (February 25, 1966), 462.

[22] Congressional Quarterly, XIV (April 22, 1966), 860.

The May poll of all voters showed Reagan even with Brown.[23] Among liberal Republicans Reagan closed the gap between himself and Christopher from seventeen percentage points in April to two percentage points in mid-May.[24] This was due partially to the smear tactics of the Brown organization which found an infringement of the California milk laws in Christopher's past record and printed the news in Drew Pearson's syndicated column of May 9th and 10th.[25] However, the same charges had been leveled against Christopher when he ran for and won the office of mayor of San Francisco.[26]

Most sources, of which the Congressional Quarterly was typical, felt that Reagan, guided by Spencer-Roberts and Associates, was shedding his conservative image and turning his lack of experience into an asset.[27] Also, Christopher, in the last months of the campaign, had frequently ignored Parkinson's law. On June 2 Christopher

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[23]"Parkinson's Law," loc. cit.

[24]Totten J. Anderson and Eugene C. Lee, "The 1966 Election in California," Western Political Quarterly, XX (June, 1967), 539.

[25]Boyarsky, op. cit., p. 147.

[26]Morrie Ryskind, "California: the Final Battle?," National Review, XVIII (November 1, 1966), 1096.

[27]Congressional Quarterly, XXIV (June 10, 1966), 1243.

leveled an attack against Reagan's early Democratic affiliation and his friendliness with extremist groups.[28]

Two signs indicate that Reagan's speaking and image building was effectively done. First, Reagan defeated Christopher by over 600,000 votes.[29] Totten Anderson and Eugene Lee, writing in The Western Political Quarterly, state that Reagan's public relations firm had created a moderate image for him and that "significantly, the polls indicated that Reagan's efforts to portray himself as a moderate were proving successful."[30] Second, the June 23, 1966, California poll showed Reagan leading Brown by fifty-two per cent to thirty-seven per cent with eleven per cent undecided. Reagan's margin was the largest held by any candidate--Democratic or Republican--immediately following a primary election since Earl Warren's in 1946.[31]

A review of the polls in mid-June showed crime, drugs, juvenile delinquency, racial problems, state taxes, financing and welfare, free speech on the Berkeley campus, and the Rumford open-housing bill to be the general

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[28] Ibid. [29] Ibid.

[30] Anderson and Lee, op. cit., 539-40.

[31] Congressional Quarterly, XXIV (June 22, 1966), 1492.

issues of the campaign. They were to remain the issues until November.[32]

In mid-August, the Democrats released a document approved by the National Fair Campaign Practices Committee listing Reagan's extremist associations.[33] This release may have caused Reagan to lose ground to Brown in the September polls, but he apparently refuted the charge effectively. The polls indicated a Reagan lead in October and in November he defeated Brown by one million votes.[34] According to a news magazine: "Reagan surprised even the pollsters, none of whom predicted a one million vote lead over old professional Pat Brown."[35]

Reagan's sweeping victory in June seemed to predict his chance to win in November. A poll in mid-June showed Reagan was favored by fifty-five per cent to thirty-one per cent over Brown as the person most likely to do the better job of handling the problems of the state,[36] indicating that he was convincing the people of his competence in the field of politics.

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[32] Ibid., 550. [33] Ibid., 545.

[34] Congressional Quarterly, XXIV (July 28, 1966), 1310.

[35] "Ronald Reagan Plays Surgeon," Reporter, XXXVI (August 6, 1967), 11.

[36] Anderson and Lee, op. cit., 550.

A September California poll found that the people surveyed felt Reagan's lack of experience his greatest deficiency, but the same poll also showed that seventy-one per cent felt that "the G.O.P. candidate's personality and his speaking ability were his most outstanding qualities."[37]

II. REAGAN'S CAMPAIGN SPEAKING

Of all factors, speaking was probably Reagan's most effective method of creating a favorable image. Reagan's ability to impress a large majority of the people of California through his speaking during the campaign seems to lead to this conclusion. In this section some of the characteristics of Reagan's speaking which seemed to enhance his image will be discussed.

Three means were used most by Reagan to create ethos and thus a more favorable image: (1) a changing view which gravitated toward a more moderate philosophy; (2) a conversion of his personal and non-political image by emphasizing his competence for political office; and (3) using generalities and verbalisms to avoid defining issues.

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[37] Ibid.

The specific purpose of this section is to discuss these three factors specifically in two of Reagan's speeches, and generally in his campaign speaking.

The first speech, "A Moment of Truth,"[38] delivered on June 8, 1965, showed a Reagan style that had not changed markedly from that present in the speech given for Goldwater eight months earlier. Reagan by now was definitely speaking with thoughts of the governorship, and there were indications suggesting an attempt on his part to moderate his political views. Whether Spencer-Roberts and Associates affected Reagan's stand at this time is hard to ascertain. Reagan had contacted them before the time the speech was given but no contract had been signed and no serious work begun.

Several points in this speech indicate that Reagan had thought about his conservative philosophy and his place on the political spectrum. Early in the speech he called the administration a conservative one because it advocated a continuation of the status quo. He said:

> In the last campaign those in power presented themselves actually as conservatives, conservatives in the sense that they would bring about no drastic change, that here we had a peaceful and a prosperous America and things would go along in this easy way.

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[38] Vital Speeches, XXXI (September 1, 1965), 681-6. All references to "A Moment of Truth" are from this text.

> In short, they promised to maintain the status quo--that's Latin for the mess we're in.

This seems a definite attempt to shed the conservative label associated with the section of the party represented by Reagan. He had analyzed the 1964 campaign well and knew that another Goldwater disaster would leave little chance for a Republican victory in 1966.[39] He projected an image that seemed more moderate than the Goldwater image of 1964.

Reagan was not denying the conservative philosophy but only professing it in a way which made it less conspicuous. Later in this speech he called for an end to 1964 thinking:

> And this is where the Republican responsibility comes in. We can't meet the problems of a divided world with a splinter party. For too long you and I have been Republicans complete with descriptive adjectives and hyphens. We've been moderate Republicans, liberal Republicans, conservative Republicans, main street Republicans, whatever that means. The truth of the matter is we've been sucker Republicans.

The opposition, Reagan said, had put labels on the Republican party, and the party had accepted them.

The speech reflected Reagan's concern for a party unity which would bring conservatives further into the party. It also foreshadowed the more obvious attempt

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[39] James Phelan, "Can Reagan Win in California?" op. cit., 91.

by Reagan to shift his image in the following months of the campaign.

On April 19, 1966, Reagan's speech "The Creative Society," was given in Los Angeles at the University of Southern California.[40] This speech, in which most of the major issues of the campaign were commented upon, was delivered in the heat of the primary campaign. The pressure on Reagan because of his lack of experience was strong in early 1966, and this speech was representative of Reagan's campaign speaking.

The speech demonstrated clearly the shift made by Reagan from "A Moment of Truth," delivered ten months before, and from his earlier speeches. The shift toward a more moderate image is most obvious in those ideas which Reagan did not discuss. The bits of conservatism, strongly articulated earlier, were less clearly defined and accepted only the moral sense of conservatism. Most of the specific examples were dropped, and the examples that were used were in a positive vein. Consider the

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[40]Cited in Kathleen Dorey, "Two Types of Identification in the 1966 Gubernatorial Primary Campaign Speeches of Ronald Reagan and Governor Edmund G. Brown," (unpublished Master's thesis, University of California at Santa Barbara, 1966), pp. 100-08. All references to "The Creative Society" are from the text cited here.

clear and negative tone of a sentence from "A Time For Choosing":

> Our natural, inalienable rights are now considered to be a dispensation from the government, and freedom has never been so fragile, so close to slipping from our grasp.

In "The Creative Society," the idea was stated positively:

> . . . that you and I have the capacity for self government [is a new idea]--the dignity and the ability and the God-given freedom to make our own decisions, to plan our lives and to control our own destiny.

It was no longer government which controlled our rights but rather ourselves.

Another comparison with this example from "A Time for Choosing" can be made:

> Government programs once launched, never disappear. Actually, a government bureau is the nearest thing to eternal life we'll ever see on this earth.

In "The Creative Society," there was another example criticizing big government:

> There is a definite and active role for government, but as our numbers increase and society grows more complex, the idea of an economy planned or controlled by government just doesn't make sense.

There was a difference in tone, heightened by the fact that the latter speech was not as specific in citing examples which condemned bureaucracy and big government. The latter speech was also more positive, in that Reagan proposed solutions instead of just attacking the <u>status quo</u>.

To add to the effect and to keep the tone of the speech mild and avoid nasty remnants of the mud slinging both within the party and with the opposition Reagan did not attack his opposition. He had no intention of giving anyone within the party reason to reject him. Even when mentioning the policies of the present administration his references were to the Governor but never specifically to Brown.

In "The Creative Society," references to the opposition were not ad hominem. The object of Reagan's attacks was always stated generally to keep himself from being identified with the conservative bloc by his attacks on the opposition:

> The administration in Sacramento is guilty of a leadership gap. Unwilling, or unable, to solve the problems of California, it has reduced this state to virtually an administrative district of the Federal Government.

The second reference to the opposition in the speech also carefully avoids labeling any particular person:

> The present administration's new approach to our deteriorating business climate is always another pill out of the same old bottle. Build another bureau, add another tax, put unemployed on the public role.

He proposes a solution: turn to the businessmen for help, but he suggested no particular program. Again he is also trying to remain nebulous about the opposition--he does not even allude to his Republican opponent

Christopher in this speech--about programs and about his stands on issues.

Reagan was very smooth in handling smears made by Brown on his character. In one instance he answered Brown's charge that he was an extremist of the Nazi variety by saying in his speech: "Brown's own contributions are so heavy-handed and ridiculous. . . extreme phraseology from one who professes to deplore extremism."[41]

These examples represented an attempt to carefully change his image by using a milder approach to issues, bolstered by an attempt by Reagan to appear more moderate and not label himself by being in strong opposition to any person.

Reagan's shifting of personal image to political image, whether conscious or not, was present in "A Moment of Truth." Earlier speeches had alluded to his experience as SAG president in an obvious attempt to give an impression of competence to speak on political issues--but not necessarily to hold office. In "A Moment of Truth," Reagan's allusion to his experience was missing. Instead, in the introduction of the speech, Reagan showed concern

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[41]"Ronald Reagan Campaign Purring," National Review, XVIII (August 23, 1966), 818.

with his personal image which he probably knew would reflect on his political image in the up-coming campaign:

> I'm always concerned . . . least they start going through the motion pictures I've been in. Now I don't mean I'm ashamed of all of them but anyone who has been around Hollywood for any length of time has made some movies that the studio didn't want them good, it wanted them Thursday.

That he was still trying to create confidence in his ability to talk about and handle political problems was evident in the number of statistics and examples used. There were about forty examples and almost sixty statistics. This must have seemed impressive considering Reagan's usually extemporaneous delivery.

Whereas little attempt was made in the earlier speech to create ethos or any sense of political competence, in "The Creative Society" there was a consistent attempt by Reagan to prove political competence both directly through ethical proof and indirectly through attempts to convince the people that political experience was not necessary to handle competently the job of Governor.

In "The Creative Society," Reagan immediately sounded the note which would indirectly create ethos and build the image of political competence in the minds of the people. First he led into the argument with the statement: ". . . we have an attitude sometimes apathetic--sometimes cynical--toward the conduct of

public affairs." According to Reagan a double-standard existed for politics, and ". . . [we] excuse it with the expression: 'Well, that's politics,'" all the while putting himself with the audience as part of "we."

Reagan continued the argument with the interesting statement:

> I realize that modern political dialogue concerns itself largely with false image-making, rather than with legitimate debate over differing viewpoints; and no candidate can hope to engage in a political contest without experiencing the deliberate distortions of his positions and his beliefs. But I sometimes wonder if we haven't reached one of those moments in time when the stakes are too high for this kind of middle-age juvenile delinquency.

This was rather ironic in the sense that Reagan himself did not deal with issues very deeply. But actually, he tried to impune the smear tactics which were very prominent in this campaign. With other more general allusions to the corruption of politics Reagan pointed out that the people had given politicians a chance to run the government, and they had failed.

Reagan stated that "you have a right to know. . . where I stand," and it was here that he clinched his argument he had led into. His stand was as a citizen politician and therefore outside the class of untrustworthy politicians. He said: "You and I have the capacity for self-government--the dignity and the ability

and the God-given freedom to make our own decisions, to plan our own lives and to control our own destiny."

He attempted to make himself seem competent by appearing to possess good moral attributes needed for political office. He was a citizen, he identified with his audience, and therefore he seemed honest and sincere. Reagan was known from personal life and from films to be an honest and sincere man. Competence was not equated with experience but with honesty and sincerity.

Reagan also exemplified the do-it-yourself amateur attitude that most Americans hold in believing that anyone can do the work of a politician. It is to this attitude that Reagan appealed with his previous reputation for honesty and sincerity. This idea was concluded with an injunction:

> The Creative Society . . . is simply a return to the people of the privilege of self-government . . . citizens . . . serving where their experience qualifies them, proposing common sense answers for California's problems.

Reagan's peroration called for a dream government with no double-standard of morality and one in which the government is administered by qualified and dedicated people:

> Do you still have the courage and capacity to dream? If so I wish you'd join me in a dream. Join me in a dream of a California whose government isn't characterized by political hacks and cronies and relatives--an administration that doesn't make its

> decisions based on political expediency but on moral truth . . . . This is a practical dream--it's a dream you can believe in--it's a dream worthy of your generation. Better yet, it's a dream that can come true and all we have to do is want it badly enough.

The plea imagined something better for the people of California, and showed Reagan's desire for a new approach in government. While the approach was not outlined in a specific detail, the implication was that Ronald Reagan could solve California's problems.

Reagan also developed ethos by other means in this speech. He praised the people of California:

> There is no major problem that cannot be resolved by a vigorous and imaginative state administration willing to utilize the tremendous potential of our people. We have the greatest concentration of industrial and scientific research facilities of any state in the Union . . . . We have attracted the most youthful, the brightest and the best trained people from every state and every nation.

In the traditional sense he gained or tried to gain ethos through good will and an interest in his audience and the solution of their problems. He, Ronald Reagan, was going to utilize the great talents of the state to solve its problems.

Reagan also addressed himself in a general way to the specific problems shown to be of concern to the people: taxes, welfare and crime, etc. Reagan shared their concern:

> A skyrocketing crime rate has given California almost double its proportionate share of crime--crimes of violence--simply because the state, as a result of certain judicial decisions, denies local governments the right to pass ordinances for the protection of the people.

Through statements similar to this he achieved a seeming concern for the welfare of the people. In this case he continued to state that bills should be passed "to make our streets safe again." Most of Reagan's solutions were left to the creative imagination of his audience; they only take on general outlines for solutions.

The preceding discussion has demonstrated Reagan's shift toward a moderation of his image and his use of ethical appeals to establish his moderate image and his political competence in the minds of his audience. A generality in statements and a use of verbalism in words and phrases became a third major tactic used by Reagan. By these means he was able to appear to agree with a majority of the people on most of the issues.

"The Creative Society" demonstrated Reagan's use of generalities. The speech contained approximately ten statistics and an equal number of examples, indicating a lack of specifics and a generous use of generalization.

In comparison "A Time for Choosing," probably Reagan's most general speech until the campaign because of its television adaptation, contained many statistics and examples:

> We were told four years ago that seventeen million people went to bed hungry each night . . . . But now we are told that 9.3 million families are poverty stricken on the basis of earning less than $3,000 a year. Welfare spending is ten times greater than in the dark depths of the depression.

Compare that statement with a statement from "The Creative Society":

> A people that can reach out to the stars has decided that the problems of human misery can be solved and they'll settle for nothing less. The big question is not whether--but how, and at what price.

A change was made to statements less concrete, and there was also a tendency to change the tone to make up for or replace examples and statistics.

Another example which illustrates the reversal in tone and approach of "The Creative Society" from earlier Reagan speeches, was this one from "A Moment of Truth":

> Federal employees outnumber state employees in 30 of the 50 states including our own. Today it only takes 12 doctors for every 10,000 people in America to keep us well and healthy. It only takes 40 mechanics and oil station attendants to keep our cars running. It takes 130 Federal employees for every 10,000 of us. There are hundreds of Government corporations operating thousands of businesses in direct competition with the private businessmen and in so doing these Government-owned corporations have lost to date $81 billion, more than a fourth of the national debt.

In comparison "The Creative Society" was much more general:

> Five years ago, we were sixth among the states in our ability to attract new industries; today we have fallen to 13th. And running like a thread through this survey are the reports of government's unfriendly attitude toward business, evidenced by the harrassing

> regulations, needless paper work, and regressive tax policies.

Reagan chose to take on a general tone and style in his campaign speaking because it conveyed meaning in a less exact, less harsh manner. These general statements were not as easily associated with any stand as the documented thoughts that Reagan earlier espoused in "A Moment of Truth":

> Well let us, as Al Smith once admonished, "look at the record." The dollar has dropped another several cents in purchasing power in these 4½ years. We've added more than $30 billion to the national debt . . . Crime is up 30% and the farmers' income is down eight per cent.

Reagan also used specific examples to show the trouble with bureaucracy:

> Every businessman could tell us his own story of harrassment. The natural gas producers have a beaut. They were handed a questionnaire not too long ago that was 428 pages long. It weighed 10 pounds and each page was 24 inches long and it had room for hundreds of entries. They had to fill it out in quadruplicate . . . it will take 17,000 accountant manhours . . . .

Or this example:

> While the government was building those 28,000 units private enterprise in the same period built 27,000,000 dwelling units.

In these earlier speeches for almost every generalization he made about the evil of big government Reagan used at least one example and a host of statistics to document his case. The earlier speeches depended on

specific support, mostly negative, in attacking big government. There were many references to "authority": Macaulay, De Tocqueville, Gompers, Professor Tytler, Jefferson, Jackson, Cleveland, and Lincoln.

Gladwin Hill of the Los Angeles bureau of the New York Times writes that Californians' most acute concern, according to professional polls, was taxes. The way the people felt they could most easily eliminate excessive spending was in welfare expenditures.[42] In "The Creative Society" Reagan generalized:

> No small part of the heavy tax load that is born by the working men and women of our state is a welfare load which doubled in the last five years and is increasing faster than our spending on education. Those who administer welfare at the county and local levels have their hands tied by excessive regulations and red tape imposed by both Washington and Sacramento . . . . Much of welfare spending could become investing if we would direct some of that spending toward education and training to prevent people from becoming public dependents in the first place.

But in "A Time for Choosing," Reagan said:

> But seriously what are we going to do to those who seek help? Not too long ago, a judge called me here in Los Angeles. He told me of a young woman who had come before him for a divorce. She had six children, was pregnant with her seventh. Under his questioning, she revealed her husband was a laborer earning $250 a month. She wanted a divorce so that she could get an $80 raise. She is eligible for $330 a month in the aid to dependent children program.

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[42]Hill, op. cit., 377.

There seemed to be a striking difference in Reagan's use of generalization during his different speaking periods. Even the 1964 speech for Goldwater delivered on coast-to-coast television was much more specific and contained many more examples than "The Creative Society."

There were specific examples in "The Creative Society" speech, but they appeared less frequently. The most specific was an example of the way the problem of deprived juveniles could best be solved:

> A businessman in Texas, brought up in poverty--now successful--founded a boys ranch. He and his wife worked tirelessly--just the two of them--and they have developed what J. Edgar Hoover has called a "blue print for the prevention of crime." 300 boys, ranging in age from 4 to 17, are cared for at a per capita cost of about $1,600 a year. Compare this with the $3600 a year it costs to maintain a boy in Juvenile Hall.

This example was reminiscent of Reagan's earlier style.

Reagan wanted to soften the speech and make it less harsh and conservative sounding. This effect might have been achieved with different examples, but this might have resulted in labeling him as a moderate, which would have repelled conservative votes. Thus, he spoke in generalities which shunned labels and identified with all.

Another factor which helped to create the desired effect, consciously or not, was Reagan's use of nebulous words or phrases or "verbalisms" as defined by Kathleen Corey:

> The term "verbalism" . . . refers to a word or a phrase used to connote rather than denote meanings to a varied audience--nebulous phrases that represent different meanings to different people . . . . Verbalism makes it more difficult for the audience to determine a speaker's position. Verbalism is generally based upon somewhat nebulous traditional principles, i.e., "justice," "Americanism," or "God-given freedom."[43]

The preceding illustrations show that Reagan used these kinds of words often. In "A Moment of Truth," he referred to: "this world of politics is a very wonderful thing, . . . Democratic institutions, . . . and freedom," but verbalisms are difficult to find in a speech where Reagan used so many specific examples to clarify his meaning.

In later speaking verbalisms occur more frequently. In "The Creative Society" he used: "A people that can reach out to the stars, . . . modern political dialogue, . . . leadership gap, . . . double-dealing, . . . moral truth, . . . false image-making, . . . legitimate debate, bargain-basement politics, . . . ordinary citizens, . . . wheeling and dealing, . . . practical dreamer, . . . the

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[43]Corey, op. cit., p. 6.

original dream which became this nation, . . . puzzle palaces on the Potomac, . . . and meaningful personal fulfillment."

According to Corey, Reagan "had to concentrate his rhetorical efforts on development of his image and his philosophy."[44] In examining Reagan's speaking these same techniques of verbalism were used throughout the campaign.[45]

III. NON-RHETORICAL FACTORS AFFECTING IMAGE

There were a number of non-rhetorical factors which contributed to Ronald Reagan's image. The more important of these factors are: previous reputation; Reagan's personal appearance; the proper and effective use of television; and Reagan's use of Spencer-Roberts, Biasco, and Datamatics to bring out his best characteristics and hence, to create a favorable image.

Reagan's previous reputation in the minds of many stems from his early movie appearances and was a favorable one in the minds of most people.

Reagan's appearance also greatly aided his image. A New York Times editorial stated:

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[44] Ibid., p. 7.

[45] Ibid., p. 71.

> The newest word of political jargon--"image"--is drawn from the television world. Its widespread use denotes the fact for many viewers--who are also voters--that how a man looks and projects himself is more persuasive than the facts about his experience, competence or depth of understanding. . . . Mr. Reagan is now playing the role of a gubernatorial candidate. He is tall, lean and bronzed by the sun; he smiles handsomely and speaks well.[46]

With Reagan's entry into the 1966 campaign most references to his campaigning noted his appearance. They referred to his "somber brown suit, tapered white collar, and discreet tie, all impeccable . . . . and his strong, youthful, and vigorous, new clean, young look of a JFK, Lindsay, or Hatfield."[47]

Reagan was also described as:

> . . . tall, smiling, nut-brown, ruddy cheeked, candid, modest, and overwhelmingly easy to take--in short, very much the "good guy" he has always played on the screen.[48]

Stewart Alsop wrote that at fifty-four Reagan looked to be forty, he had all of his hair, his teeth were white and flawless, his eyes were blue and unbespectacled. Nor does Reagan seem to have changed much in the last three years; he still looks the same today.

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[46]Editorial, New York Times, October 6, 1966.

[47]Oulahan, op. cit., 58-9.

[48]Alexander, "Ronald Reagan for Governor?" op. cit., 60.

Alsop wondered aloud if this was make-up or real.[49] Stanley Lawrence, in-store-director for Revlon, said he felt that Reagan was very sophisticated about the use of make-up.[50]

Reagan's effective use of television was another plus in projecting a good image. Wycoff expressed very strongly the effect television can have:

> Such scholarly findings [by Elihu Katz and Jacob Feldman] indicate what may be one of the most important--and least acknowledged--aspects of candidate appearances on television: the rational import of what they say may be a minimal part of the sentiment that they arouse in viewers.[51]

Reagan realized this early in his screen career and later in his television work. As a movie star Reagan got to see himself on the screen. He wrote:

> It has taken me years to get used to seeing myself as others see me. . . Very few of us ever see ourselves except as we look directly at ourselves in a mirror. Thus we don't know how we look from behind, from the side, walking, standing, moving normally through a room. . . . You don't see yourself because you haven't had much experience in seeing yourself.[52]

Reagan's training made him more aware than are most people of himself and his appearance. His training

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[49]Stewart Alsop, "The Good Guy," Saturday Evening Post, CCXXXVIII (November 20, 1965), 18.

[50]Kansas City Star, June 16, 1968, 18G.

[51]Wycoff, op. cit., p. 212.

[52]Reagan and Hubler, op. cit., p. 79.

on television was the same and added to his awareness of how he looked to others; it made him more at ease and more able to get the effect he wanted.

While he was in Hollywood Reagan also realized that one's personal life affected one's career work. He wrote: "There is more to it [type casting]: ours is a small community and an actor can acquire an image as much from his off-screen role as from his work on screen."[53] Whether this realization absolutely extended into Reagan's political life is doubtful, but one can say he was better equipped than most people to speak and be effective on television.

In an interview in 1967, Reagan was quoted as saying that the use of television is a secret known to actors:

> . . . [on television] you'd better mean what you say, insincerity will show up like a putty nose. . . . television has made it more possible than ever before to judge a man on the merits. It has brought us back to the political stump meeting--where the voters can look and listen and decide.[54]

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[53] Ibid., p. 232.

[54] "A Look at the Reagan Boom," U.S. News and World Report, LXIII (July 24, 1967), 54.

Wycoff partially agreed with this, but he wrote that it is treatment, not subject matter, that is important in using the television media most effectively.[55]

Reagan, in a carefully prepared film, went on state-wide television to announce his candidacy in January, 1966. The film, like others used, presented Reagan as "brief, dynamic and confident, and his words were conciliatory." There was no quarrel with the "Great Society," but only an expressed belief in government of, by and for the people.[56]

The New Republic, probably biased, wrote that this particular film ". . . was a slick, carefully-edited curtain raiser, as befits Reagan's dramatic pretensions. He made coy self-deprecating remarks about his acting career. . . ."[57]

William Roberts of Spencer-Roberts and Neil Reagan, Ronald's brother and an advertising manager, assembled a number of simple, inexpensive television shorts not meant to resemble Hollywood spectaculars. Intentionally, the candidate acted, and the films were produced awkwardly,

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[55]Wycoff, op. cit., p. 88.

[56]"Ronald Reagan: A Light in the West," op. cit., 614.

[57]"Brown vs Reagan," New Republic, CXIV (January 22, 1966), 7.

crudely and bumblingly, so that they would not attract attention to Reagan's acting career.[58] Nor did the Reagan camp over-use television but rather reportedly used less television time than the other candidates.[59]

Finally, the staff that worked for Reagan affected and helped create a favorable image. This included Spencer-Roberts, Datamatics (a subsidiary of Spencer-Roberts), and Biasco, which was hired by Reagan's managers to help him achieve competence in handling campaign issues, especially those he would have to discuss in question-answer periods.

Anderson and Lee, in their analysis of the 1966 election, wrote that:

> Professional campaign management has become virtually a necessity in California gubernatorial elections and many observers believe that the skillful guidance of Spencer-Roberts Associates contributed greatly to Reagan's success.[60]

Stewart Spencer and William Roberts operate one of the few advertising and publicity agencies that does full-time political management work exclusively and provides full electioneering services for their candidates.[61]

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[58] Boyarsky, op. cit., p. 138.

[59] "Ronald Reagan: A Light in the West," op. cit., 614.

[60] Anderson and Lee, op. cit., 543.

[61] New York Times, December 11, 1966.

It is their job to manage a campaign, including organizational control, scheduling and itinery, advertising and press releases, selection and timing of issues, and general advisement.[62] With Reagan they also served as speech writers at the beginning of the campaign.

According to Roberts: "It is our job to know our party and who is doing what to whom. We know whom to talk to and whom not to talk to in each county." They work solely for Republicans. In 1962 they managed Kuchel's election, and in 1964 they came very close to winning California's presidential primary for Rockefeller.[63] They are rumored to have been paid 150,000 dollars for handling Reagan's campaign.[64]

Spencer and Roberts met with Reagan several times in April, 1965, to decide if they were to represent him. They knew Reagan was conservative and did not wish to lose as Goldwater had lost in 1964. Reagan implied that he also wanted to moderate his image.[65]

Anderson and Lee wrote that:

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[62] "Ronald Reagan, Lancelot Out of the West," Saturday Review, L (September 23, 1967), 89. See also Anderson and Lee, op. cit., 543.

[63] New York Times, October 16, 1966.

[64] New York Times, December 11, 1966.

[65] Boyarsky, op. cit., p. 107.

> The campaign was conducted with occasional Hollywood flourishes, but with emphasis on simplicity and sincerity of the candidate. Spencer-Roberts steadfastly denied trying to change the Reagan image. Spencer declared that "that king-maker stuff is a lot of bull. In politics you don't change a guy's image and get anywhere. If you try . . . and put words in his mouth, people see right through him. A guy has X number of qualities, and you emphasize some and not others, that's all."
>
> Whatever the validity of such a political homily, three aspects of Reagan's issue behavior revealed skillful tactical maneuvering: he did not respond to repeated charges that he was an "extremist" and was appealing to the "white backlash" vote; he settled for variations upon three themes; and his positions on key issues moved progressively from the right to the center of the ideological spectrum.[66]

Spencer-Roberts advised Reagan on almost every phase of the issues. He did not charge extremism against the Democrats as other Republicans often did when attacked. Nor did he attack other Republicans since Spencer-Roberts wished to avoid the party splits caused in 1964.[67] Reagan also avoided mentioning Barry Goldwater's name, or visits by Goldwater which could bring to memory the 1964 presidential election in California.[68]

Roberts was quoted as saying: ". . . he's kind of supplanted Goldwater in people's minds. But we're

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[66]Anderson and Lee, op. cit., 543.

[67]New York Times, December 11, 1966.

[68]"Ronald for Real," Time, LXXXVIII (October 7, 1966), 34.

going to try to shift that image. In fact we've got to if we're going to win. . . ."[69]

Spencer-Roberts encouraged Reagan to emphasize that he was a citizen politician, that his real qualities were honesty and sincerity, and that simple "common sense" answers were the solution to the problems of government. President Eisenhower, with his lack of political experience, was also cited as a favorable parallel to help counter Reagan's lack of political experience.[70]

Spencer-Roberts also encouraged the use of personal appearances when and where they would do the most good and be most effective. But they were not used to try to win hostile votes. Actually, modern political campaign management calls more for computerization and refinement for efficient campaigning with principal emphasis on selection: selection of the issues, selection of the places where votes can be changed, and selection of favorable characteristics of the candidates.

The job of Datamatics was to analyze the whole of the state with computers, the latest scientific and

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[69]Phelan, "Can Reagan Win in California?" op. cit., 89ff.

[70]Ibid., 92.

mathematical methods and detailed and up-to-date maps of ethnic, religious and economic areas and to make this analysis available for management decisions.[71]

Biasco had a very strong influence on Reagan's approach to issues, especially in the question-answer periods where he had to have quick, reasonably accurate, and, above all, consistent answers if he were to appear sharp and competent. "The Creative Society" was also partly of their making and was a major declaration of Reagan's political philosophy.[72]

Saturday Review described Biasco as follows:

> . . . a much more pivotal assignment went to Biasco--the Behavioral Research Corporation--operated by Stanley Plog . . . and Kenneth Holden . . . . Both have PhD's [psychology] and are referred to as "doctor" by their staff of 29, among them psychologists, sociologists, political scientists, and statisticians.[73]

They gave Reagan a sense of security and a consistent answer on every occasion. They made him feel competent and appear competent and helped him avoid making different replies to the same question at different places. This was one of Goldwater's mistakes in 1964.[74]

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[71] New York Times, October 16, 1966.

[72] "Ronald Reagan, Lancelot Out of the West," op. cit., 90.

[73] Ibid., 89.

[74] Ibid. See also Julius Duscha, "Will California Stand Pat?," Reporter, XXXV (September 22, 1966), 42.

Plog and Holden, with the help of their staff, gathered information which they put on five-by-eight cards into black books (eight in all). Reagan kept the books with him on the campaign trail and used them to compose speeches, and more important, studied from them so he could answer questions well during his question-answer periods and his news conferences.[75]

IV. CONCLUSION

The hardest battle seemed to have been won with Reagan's sweep of the primaries. He had convinced people that he was acceptable and competent. The size of the victory and the poll readings helped to create respect for Reagan as a candidate and caused Roberts to say: "To me it was a matter of staying alive from the primary to the general . . . . Most of the issues were ours to pick and choose."[76]

In Reagan's campaign speaking there were a number of indicators of his different tactics. To illustrate Reagan's shift toward a more moderate stand on the issues, he expressed only limited agreement with three of the seventeen issues on which Goldwater had based

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[75]Boyarsky, op. cit., pp. 144-45.

[76]Ibid., p. 150.

his campaign and which Reagan had endorsed in his speeches for Goldwater.[77] As early as January there were observations made that Reagan was inching toward a more moderate platform. He approached issues less rigidly at this time in his question-answer period.[78] Even George Romney, Governor of Michigan, said in July of 1966, that he felt Reagan had moderated his views since 1964.[79]

In October of 1966 the Congressional Quarterly observed that Reagan was projecting a more moderate image than Goldwater:

> His short, frequently simple and almost catchy answers to many of the state's problems have found a receptive audience among the voters tired of high taxes and growing welfare rolls. . . .[80]

Little more can be written about Reagan's attempt to convince the voters that he was competent for political office. The arguments used in "The Creative Society" were used throughout the campaign and apparently were effective.

The view of those on the campaign scene about Reagan's use of generalization was summarized in Newsweek:

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[77]"Ronald for Real," op. cit., 34.

[78]Oulahan, op. cit., 76.

[79]Congressional Quarterly, XXIV (July 8, 1966), 1429.

[80]Congressional Quarterly, XXIV (October 14, 1966), 2436.

> A team of UCLA professors . . . began tutoring him on state problems. And laboriously against all impulses of his nature, he learned to speak in generalities.[81]

Truth or exaggeration, it has been shown in the examination of Reagan's campaign speaking that he did substantially increase his use of generalities.

Reagan aimed at undecided votes chiefly by non-rhetorical means; presenting through his appearance and speaking those image characteristics that were best; and avoiding giving a bad impression anywhere on any issue. Reagan's previous reputation was already good. The job of Reagan and his staff was to convince the voters that he was the kind of man they wanted for Governor. No negative image, no reason why he should not be elected, was given to stir up former political ties which usually determine a voter's decision. Reagan did not attack fellow Republicans, he did not directly attack his opponents, and he was careful not to offend the voters in any way. All the while he presented a very favorable image. In Reagan's words: "I have tried to conduct myself . . . so that not a single Christopher [or any other] supporter can have a valid excuse for not supporting me."[82]

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[81]"Reagan in the Wilderness," Newsweek, LXVII (March 28, 1966), 32.

[82]As cited in Wall Street Journal, May 19, 1966, 18.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The major purpose of this study has been to examine the adaptation and use of public speaking within image politics, the relatively new political campaign mode. Image politics occurs because of the size of our society, demands to put forth a candidate appealing to a large cross-section of this society, the need to make proper use of the mass media, and most of all the habits of the voters who base final decisions on many non-rational factors. Policy issues often take a back seat to the issue of who is the better man. The candidate becomes the issue.

What part does public speaking play in this kind of campaigning? So far little seems to have been done in this area. But Ronald Reagan offered a good example to be studied, and his 1966 gubernatorial campaign against Edmund Brown became the focus of this study.

The Reagan campaign was a good example of image politics in action because Reagan had no past political reputation. Reagan, the man, very conspicuously became the issue. Reagan was quoted on a television show as saying: "Brown only talks about me; he won't discuss

the issues. . . ."[1] Actually, to Brown, Reagan was the issue, with his extremist associations, his philosophy, and his questionable qualifications. The other factors cited earlier and the special nature of California with its lack of party discipline make this a good study of image politics.

A study of image politics necessarily required a study of image and a definition of image. Since speaking was the major factor in forming image, it also was necessary to examine those factors of image associated with rhetoric. Ethos is probably the major form of rhetorical proof used in developing image since it is proof arising out of the character of the speaker on the basis of the speech.

A study of various definitions of ethos showed one by Paul I. Rosenthal to best describe the use of ethical proof in image politics. It was situationally oriented in conception. Rosenthal described two types of speaking situations, one message-oriented and one man or speaker-oriented. The latter situation is found in modern political campaign speaking.

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[1]As cited in Hill, op. cit., 377.

Rosenthal's definition of ethos identified it as a speaker-oriented mode of persuasion per se. Ethos is communication in which:

> . . . the persuasive effect is dominated by value response activated by the personality of the speaker as opposed to the content of the message and the perception of the personality is derived from and conveyed by the whole rhetoric--the invention, style, arrangement and delivery--the man speaking.[2]

In a study of image politics a definition of ethos alone was not sufficient because there are a number of non-rhetorical factors which bear directly on the speaking situation. A definition of image and more precisely political image was therefore necessary. Image in one sense is analogous to ethos. Ethos is created by the speaker with all of the tools of the art of rhetoric. Image is created by the political candidate with all of the tools at his command, rhetorical and non-rhetorical.

Image brings into play such things as previous reputation, appearance, the art of using mass media, acting, and the use of a staff of advisors with tremendous resources at their command. Political image is the use of this concept when brought into the political field. The question becomes who situationally appears to be

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[2]See page 18.

most competent for the office. The concept of image therefore has many aspects not adequately covered by the term ethos.

How did Ronald Reagan enter the political scene? What did he have to offer? There were a number of factors in Reagan's background which made for a personal image which easily and usefully could be converted to a favorable political image.

Reagan had established a previous reputation with the people of California as a "good guy" and was thought to be the paragon of a patriotic American. But other factors helped to make him acceptable as one competent to hold the office of governor. Reagan had very good training in the practical aspects of entertaining and more important he had extensive experience in the practical aspects of speaking. He could express an idea effectively, and he could look and act the part set out for him by his advisors to bring out his best characteristics.

In his campaign speaking three things seemed to be important in projecting a favorable image. First, he worked on a shift of image from one that sounded conservative to one that sounded more moderate. In his speeches he changed from a harsh and negative tone to one that was more mild and positive. To reinforce

this moderate image and avoid being labeled he also refrained from directly attacking his opposition. He attempted to make himself appear more competent for office by doing two things: (1) he attempted to convince people that an honest, sincere citizen would be better qualified for governor than an untrustworthy politician thinking in terms of a double-standard for politics, and (2) he displayed a knowledge of the state's political problems and an easy manner of handling questions quickly, confidently and politely in the question-answer period after speeches. Reagan's third approach to creating a favorable image in his speaking was the increased use of generalization and verbalism in order to appear to be most things to most people. The use of these strategies, whether consciously or unconsciously, helped to make the two techniques described first, more effective in creating a favorable image in his speaking.

Non-rhetorical factors, such as Reagan's appearance, were examined, and it is apparent that Reagan's good looks and excellent knowledge of make-up helped project a definite and positive physical image with which people could mentally associate other factors that they perceived about him.

Reagan's use of the media also was effective. He was experienced in seeing himself as others saw him

and was able to make himself appear to his best advantage. In the campaign he minimized his acting talent and portrayed himself less professionally than he might.

The last important part of creating Reagan's image was rather a grand extension of the speech canon of invention. The staff of Spencer-Roberts and Associates with their subsidiary Datamatics, and Biasco directed the campaign and hence influenced Reagan's efforts as a speaker. They helped him to analyze situations and directed him in selecting issues and means of approaching issues which would enhance his image most favorably. They did more, however. They also supplied him with a schedule that enabled him to most profit from speaking. They gave him by computer analysis the parts of the state and the areas within these parts where he would most likely influence voters.

Reagan himself had much to do with winning the campaign. He had studied Goldwater's mistakes and knew generally for what the people would be looking. The use of image-makers while making campaigning much more efficient and much more sophisticated than it has ever been before does not eliminate the art of speaking.

The use of firms such as Spencer-Roberts does, however, change the emphasis and purpose of speaking within a political campaign. The orator must still

meet each situation individually and with its own pecularities, and successfully overcome these problems. But the most profitable situations are chosen and audiences most likely to respond to the image the speaker will portray in his speech are selected.

This then has become the special and unique problem of the speaker as an image candidate. His problem has now become one of projecting himself in the most favorable light and in a manner most likely to convert voters. It is possible that some factors will intervene to make policy issues more important again, but none is in sight at present.

Some politicians are slow to adapt to this new campaign technique but Reagan obviously has not been one of those. Perhaps he was better prepared than most to meet the problems presented by image politics.

Another study might look further at speaking in the new and larger persuasive structure of image politics to evaluate trends taken in speaking and how these trends adapted to this new situation.

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