

Life Of President Roosevelt—One Of World's Most Powerful Leaders

Franklin Delano Roosevelt overcame what could have been a catastrophic illness and became one of the world's most powerful popular leaders in peace and war.

A son of wealth, he was the hard-hitting champion of the forgotten man."

Overwhelmingly defeated he was the first President to serve more than two terms.

Crippled by infantile paralysis in 1924, he spurned invalidism, projected his personality into virtually every aspect of the nation's life, and was the most widely traveled chief executive his country ever had.

Many Social Reforms

He was commander-in-chief of the largest armed force the United States ever mobilized which participated in the world's greatest war.

More than any predecessor he brought the federal government into the life of every citizen.

He was responsible for far-reaching social and economic reforms, and his administration spent billions where administrations before his spent millions or even thousands.

Mr. Roosevelt was protagonist in one domestic drama after another—the bank holiday, NRA, social security, and the WPA.

But the excitement and impact of these efforts to cope with stifling economic depression in the 1930s, were paled by the verve of his war leadership—dashing trips to Cairo, Tehran, Casablanca, Yalta—and conferences with other world leaders almost in the shadow of enemy planes and guns.

Born in 1882

He was born on Jan. 30, 1882, and grew up on a 1000-acre family estate overlooking the Hudson at Hyde Park, N. Y.

Joining the Democratic party, he was elected to the state senate in 1910 and was re-elected in 1912.

He early espoused Woodrow Wilson and campaigned for his nomination at the Democratic national convention in Baltimore in 1912. When Wilson was elected, he made young Roosevelt assistant secretary of the navy.

After world war I, he fought vigorously for the League of Nations.

Though only 38, the 1920 Democratic convention selected him as James M. Cox's vice presidential running mate.

He made more than 800 campaign speeches but he and Cox were defeated by the Republican Harding-Coolidge ticket and he began practicing law.

Fought Affliction

Four years later, while swimming at Camp Bello, Me., during a summer vacation, he became infected with the infantile paralysis virus.

Tall, handsome, inexhaustibly energetic, still youthful, he was paralyzed from the waist down.

For four agonizing years, he fought his affliction, supported loyally by his wife and friends, and ultimately won out. His legs were withered, but his spirit and energy flamed anew.

Just as he won this victory in 1932, Alfred E. Smith, whom Mr. Roosevelt had helped into the New York governorship in 1920, called him back into politics.

Governor of New York

Mr. Roosevelt ran for governor to bolster Smith's campaign as the Democratic candidate for President against the Republican Herbert Hoover.

Smith lost New York state and the nation, but Roosevelt won the governorship by 25,000 votes. In 1930 he was re-elected by 725,000 votes. With a record like that, he was the strongest candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1932.

Before the 1932 convention, the Roosevelt-Smith friendship cooled. Smith, wanting the nomination again, made a futile attempt to "stop" his erstwhile protege and disciple.

In winning the nomination, Roosevelt was aided by a new political friend, James A. Farley, who later was to break with him on the third-term issue.

Roosevelt started breaking precedents even before he became President. To show the country that his affliction could not immobilize him, he flew to Chicago to accept the nomination. That was the eve of his historic tenure in the White House.

First President to Fly

He was never happier than when breaking a precedent. He was the first to win a third term. And, of course, fourth.

He was the first President to leave the country in wartime. He was the first President to fly.

He roamed the world by train, battleship, automobile and airplane. In peace and in war, Mr. Roosevelt was a man of action and battle.

Most of his major domestic reforms required drive to put them across and he relished his role as an active war leader, which required dangerous trips across oceans and continents to map strategy firsthand with British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, Soviet Premier Josef Stalin and Chinese Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek.

Each of Mr. Roosevelt's terms was filled with drama. His first, starting in 1933, saw his fight for the "forgotten man" and it succeeded to a great extent in bringing the nation out of a deadening economic depression.

His second term began with the supreme court battle in 1937—in which he tried unsuccessfully to increase the membership of the court after it had declared several New Deal laws unconstitutional.

Fruitless Peace Appeals

Less than a year after he started his third term in 1941, the nation was plunged into war.

The final two years of his second term were the basic period of transition from peace to war. In 1939 and 1940 menacing and spreading wars in Europe and Asia forced him to subordinate the social objectives of the "New Deal" to a



Twelve busy years in the White House: Left to right: On March 4, 1933, President Roosevelt had a few last words with retiring President Herbert Hoover; Harry Hopkins became Mr. Roosevelt's right-hand man; in 1935 a smile despite the dust bowl troubles and a fight with the supreme court over NRA, social security and the NLRB; hot dogs and relaxation.

Congress was reluctant to impose new taxes.

Early in 1944, objecting to the veto of a tax bill which the administration considered insufficient, Senate Majority Leader Alben W. Barkley, one of his closest friends, resigned as Democratic leader of the senate and was promptly re-elected by his colleagues.

Congress as promptly enacted the tax measures over the veto. But later, Barkley supported the President for a fourth term.

Fell Ill Late in 1943

Mr. Roosevelt fell ill in late 1943 just after he got back from Tehran.

Physically and mentally tired, he was an easy victim for colds and sinus and bronchial irritations which continued to affect him during the first months of 1944.

His doctor, Vice Adm. Ross T. McIntire, in late March of 1944, put him through painstaking physical examination and wrote this prescription:

"Sun, salt air, and complete rest."

The prescription was filled at Hobcaw Barony, Bernard M. Baruch's 23,000-acre South Carolina estate, from April 9 to May 7.

The 4th Term Question

When he came back to Washington, before he lay his big personal decision for 1944: Whether to seek re-election.

Before the 1944 political season blossomed fully, the country forgot, for time at least, about forthcoming political conventions and concentrated on the invasion of France which began on June 6.

The President continued to say nothing—even after the Republicans gave their Presidential nomination to Thomas E. Dewey, governor of New York, late in June.

Finally, about a week before the Democratic convention in July, Mr. Roosevelt informed Robert E. Hannegan, the national Democratic chairman, that he would accept nomination for a fourth term, but would not run for office "in the usual partisan, political sense."

Confers at Pearl Harbor

He accepted the nomination on July 20 in a radio speech from the United States marine base at San Diego, telling the nation that while he would not campaign in the usual sense, he would "feel free to represent to the people the facts about matters of concern to them and especially to correct any misrepresentations."

Then the President, always a great showman, emphasized his role as wartime Commander in Chief by sailing out into the Pacific, and conferring with Gen. Douglas MacArthur, Adm. Chester W. Nimitz and other Pacific war leaders at Pearl Harbor.

On the British battleship Prince of Wales and the American cruiser Augusta, Mr. Roosevelt, Churchill and their ranking staff chiefs composed the brief "Charter," an eight-point declaration of policy which was the foundation for the organization of the United Nations.

Pearl Harbor—Day of Infamy

The "day of infamy" that plunged the United States into war came on Dec. 7, 1941, when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. Germany and Italy then joined Japan in openly declaring war against the United States.

The President asked and received war declarations from Congress against Japan, Germany and Italy within 48 hours. Churchill rushed to Washington, arriving Dec. 22 and remaining until mid-January.

The United Nations declaration was drafted and signed.

Churchill made another trip to Washington June 1942, shortly after Mr. Roosevelt had received Soviet Foreign Commissar V. M. Molotov in the White House.

The Anglo-American staff chiefs reported that a lowland European invasion was impractical for the time being, and the decision was made to go into North Africa.

Flew to Casablanca

The African invasion began in November, 1942, and shortly after the New Year, Mr. Roosevelt flew to Casablanca, which was then within fighter plane range of the Germans to meet again with Churchill. From that meeting came the Roosevelt-Churchill pledge to accept nothing but the "unconditional surrender" of the axis.

At Casablanca, the high command of the American and British armed forces decided to intensify the Mediterranean offensive. Allied armies took Sicily, invaded Italy, and during the summer of 1943 Italy surrendered.

Mr. Roosevelt and Churchill got together again in August, 1943, in Quebec and later in Washington, and made plans to meet again in Cairo and Tehran with Premier Josef Stalin and Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek.

From those four-power conferences held during November and December came the decision to invade Western Europe in the spring of 1944 and Dwight D. Eisenhower, the American who commanded the invasion of French Africa, was named allied commander-in-chief.

Action Was His Keynote

Action was a keynote of all the years. Mr. Roosevelt served as President.

Mr. Roosevelt waited until late October, however, to campaign in earnest. Then he made rapid swings through New York, Philadelphia, Chicago and Boston. He stood on his record, particularly the war achievements, and on Nov. 7 was re-elected by approximately 25,500,000 popular votes to 22,000,000 for Dewey. His electoral vote margin was a landslide—432 to 99.

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Four-power conferences

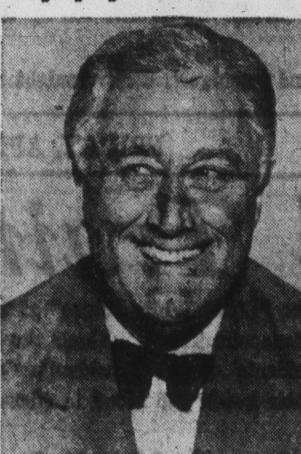
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the Constitution, and by the assumption on the part of the supreme court of legislative powers which properly belong to the congress. It is true that the precise method which I recommend was not adopted, but the objective, as every person in the United States knows today, was achieved.

The results are not even open to dispute. Attacks recently made on the supreme court itself by ultra-conservative members of the bar indicate how fully our liberal ideas have already prevailed."

In contrast to the "political honeymoon" of the "100 days" at the outset of his administration, Mr. Roosevelt's second term was marked by great political battles between Mr. Roosevelt and his entourage of "liberals" and the old-time conservative Democrats who largely controlled congress.

This division exploded in 1938 in Mr. Roosevelt's "purge" directed against his conservative opponents at the polls.

It failed and the failure was reflected in steadily increasing hostility in congress to his key measures.

Reorganizes Government

Mr. Roosevelt personally intervened in Democratic primaries to prevent the renomination of Senator Walter F. George of Georgia, Ellison D. Smith of South Carolina, and Millard F. Tydings of Maryland, and against Rep. John J. O'Connor of New York, chairman of the house rules committee. He unseated O'Connor, but George, Smith and Tydings were renominated and re-elected.

During this period, Mr. Roosevelt worked steadily reorganizing the federal government.

Defeated by the house in a previous effort to get authorization to reorganize, he had calmly renewed his efforts for authorization in the 78th congress and got it in an act approved April 3, 1939.

Alert to World Events

Few presidents were more keenly alert to world developments than was Mr. Roosevelt.

As assistant secretary of navy during the world war, he epitomized the spirit of the war.

When clouds of war rolled over Asia and Europe during 1937, 1938 and 1939, Mr. Roosevelt never hesitated to throw the full prestige of the United States in the balance for peace.

Mr. Roosevelt had proclaimed a limited state of national emergency.

He instituted a navy-coast guard neutrality patrol of coastal waters, added to the manpower of the navy, navy and marine corps, reconditioned world war destroyers, and added personnel to the FBI for counter-espionage and anti-sabotage drives.

Late in 1936, he sent Congress a \$273,000,000 deficiency estimate to pay for these extraordinary precautions.

The navy was in the midst of the greatest building program of its peacetime history.

Launched Big Program

Mr. Roosevelt, at the outset of the New Deal had launched the navy on a tremendous program.

The regular army-navy budget for the 1940 fiscal year, approved by Congress before the European war was even envisaged, called for expenditures of \$1,780,000,000, of which \$1,000,000,000 was for the navy's first line of defense.

In November, 1939, he said at Warm Springs, Ga., that even this program would not be sufficient to guard America.

Because of his physical handicap, Mr. Roosevelt had all sorts of advisers. He used their eyes and legs and experience.

In the White House, he surrounded himself with experts. At the head of the list in the early days was Louis McHenry Howe, a friend for 25 years. Mr. Roosevelt named him presidential secretary when he took office. He died April 12, 1936.

College professors formed the famous "brain trust," so named by a newspaper man. Some of these men were spectacular themselves.

Hopkins, Byrnes and Leahy

As the years passed by, their ranks were decimated by resignations, some returning to their classrooms while others took positions with business organizations.

Late in 1939, Presidential Secretary Stephen T. Early, in disclosing details of Mr. Roosevelt's "streamlining" of the executive department, commented that the reorganization appeared to mean that the "brain trust" no longer existed.

The President's ranking wartime advisers were Harry Hopkins, James F. Byrnes and Adm. William D. Leahy, his personal chief of staff.

Mr. Roosevelt weighed 10 pounds when he was born, the son of James and Sara Delano Roosevelt. His mother was a famous beauty of New York society and was a kinswoman of the socially prominent and wealthy Astor family. His father was prominent in the railroad world.

His early education was obtained from tutors and his parents. At 14, he was sent from his fireside classroom to Groton school for boys, a fashionable preparatory school in Groton, Mass. He was graduated with honors.

Then he went to Harvard and completed the four-year course in three years.

Married Distant Cousin

Yet he found time for athletics and edited The Harvard Crimson.

From Harvard he went to Columbia law school, afterward taking the examination for admission to the bar