Seeing the Ghost of Ronald Reagan

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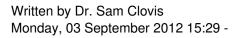
I had the honor of being on the floor of the Republican National Committee convention last night as Mitt Romney took the stage to accept the nomination of his party. Aside from the rude and disrespectful behavior of some of fellow lowans, there was a rising sense of confidence and grace as the evening progressed. Last night, we got insights into the person that is Mitt Romney, and, like most great men, there is far more to them than what is seen by the public. The personal stories of the people who have been touched by Mitt Romney were not only compelling, they were so enlightening for all who wish to listen. At the end of this truncated week of GOP celebration, we know more about Mitt Romney than after 6 YEARS of the current president campaigning and holding residence in the White House.

I am old enough to remember the rise of Ronald Reagan in the republican party. From his "A Time for Choosing" speech in 1964 to this acceptance speech in 1980, we say the metamorphosis of a man who at one time had been a union leader, a person who was pro-choice and person who believed in big government. Over that 16 years of growth, we saw a man who began to solidify his views on things and became a champion of life, a rabid defender of this nation's exceptionality, and a person who tried (with limited success) to retard the growth of government and its reach into our lives. Last night, I saw a lot of Ronald Reagan on that stage and was reminded of the power of a persona that inspires confidence. I felt great about being an American last night and know that the feeling is because I saw just enough of Ronald Reagan to know that Mitt Romney is exactly the right man at the right time for this nation. Ronald Reagan was that person at that time in 1980.

There are many among us on the right side of the political philosophy aisle that are still unhappy with the candidate selected by our party. I get that. It is much like the democrats constantly being on the watch for the gold standard of democrat politicians--John F. Kennedy. Our gold standard is Ronald Reagan. As with Kennedy, democrats are in love with the myth of JFK, and for those of us who know only what we have seen presented about Ronald Reagan, we are again in love with the myth.

I served in the Pentagon during the Reagan years and can say without qualification that I never felt better about being a member of the armed forces. Reagan and his cabinet showed great imagination and innovation in their approach to strengthening our military. Reagan stayed above the fray and let his surrogates do the in-fighting to get things done in a democrat congress. Reagan was successful. Still, there were always the loose threads hanging concerning Iran and the Contras, but the myth of Ronald Reagan still carried so much weight that we looked the other way. We were proud to be Americans and that was (and remains) a

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good thing.

Yes, I am proud to be a Christian, Conservative, Republican (in that order) and I am proud to have Mitt Romney be the standard bearer for the GOP. Like all other things, the meaning of events must be drawn from the context of those events. Last night, we witnessed history, and I am proud to say I was there to see it.