McKeldin dies at 73 of cancer

Republican was governor, city's mayor

Theodore Roosevelt McKeldin, former governor of Maryland and former mayor of Baltimore, died early yesterday at his home at 103 Goodale road.

Mr. McKeldin, who was 73, had been released from the Johns Hopkins Hospital about three weeks ago after receiving treatments for cancer.

Funeral services will be held at 11 A.M. Tuesday at the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer, 5603 North Charles street.

Governor Mandel described him as "a giant of his era" and said that his loss would be felt by "all those who shared his belief in decency and in the dignity of the individual."

Schaefer's tribute

Mayor Schaefer described him as "a man who scaled the tallest heights, but he never lost the common touch." Mr. McKeldin loved people and the city, the Mayor said, "And, in a way, he belonged to each of us."

Senator Charles McC. Mathias, Jr. (R., Md.) said: "Ted McKeldin was a Baltimore original. His style has been imitated but never duplicated. He had a monopoly on charisma before we knew what the term was.

A steadfast Republican, he had a personal appeal that transcended party lines and cut across all class and ethnic barriers. We are richer for having known him. We are poorer now that we have lost him."

Representative Paul S. Sarbanes (D., 3d) described Mr. McKeldin as "a leader of extraordinary humanity and decency." He said Mr. McKeldin's actions were "marked by a deep and uncompromising commitment to the brotherhood of man and to the American ideals of equality and justice."

The ebullient Mr. McKeldin grew up in poverty and started work as a $20-a-month office boy. He made a gift for oratory the basis of a political career that included two terms as mayor and two terms as governor, jobs which no other Republican has held for more than one term.

His career extended from a term as Baltimore's World War II mayor through the urban renewal and civil rights years of the 1960's.

He presided over the rewriting of the Baltimore City Charter and is identified with many of the state's biggest highway and redevelopment projects, including the State Office Building in Baltimore and the Charles Center and

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Inner Harbor urban renewal projects.

But it was the exuberance of his personal style of governing that dominated his administrations.

He carried this exuberance on foot through the black ghettos of East and West Baltimore in the steaming summer of 1966, when racial tensions rose after the Congress of Racial Equality declared Baltimore a "target city" and the National States Rights party held a series of Negro-baiting, segregationist rallies in Patterson Park.

He campaigned for racial peace as he had campaigned eight times for office—shooting baskets at recreation centers, throwing his arms around black youths to celebrate when the ball went through the hoop, alighting from his city limousine day after day to wade into crowds of blacks. He armed himself with a disarming grin, a pumping handshake and the greeting he gave to all Negroes: "Hello, my brother."

His impeccable striped suits and silk neckties marked him as a member of the establishment, but he was drawing on a reservoir of goodwill built up from countless visits to black churches and black high school graduations.

During his first term as governor, long before it was fashionable to promote civil rights causes, he had abolished questions asking the color and religion of applicants for state jobs.

In the summer of 1966, too, he backed his showy ghetto tours with tough action.

When the States Rights party agitators urged their white listeners to take direct action against nearby blacks, and CORE threatened to picket the segregationists' rallies, he denounced the Patterson Park upon Maryland and its life that will endure.

The Harbor Tunnel, hundreds of miles of roads, the State Office Building in Baltimore, the red brick walls on the State House grounds, more than 20 buildings on college campuses, wayside picnic areas—they were all products of the McKeldin administration.

Some of the millions of words he uttered from platforms scattered from Seattle to Tel Aviv will be remembered, too:

"Here is the man to unite our party; here is the man to unite our nation . . . he is a strong man—the Hercules to sweep the stench and stigma from the Augean stable of the Washington administration." (As he placed the name of Dwight D. Eisenhower into nomination at the 1952 Republican National Convention.)

"And so my brothers, though the heart may be heavy at the moment of departure, the deep breaths of clear conscience will ease the weight—and soon the burden that remains will be dissipated in the excitement of new contests, and the challenge of new opportunities to serve my fellow citizens." (A part of his gubernatorial "swan song" speech.)

"We have to rid our souls of prejudice." (In calling for compliance with the Supreme Court decision outlawing segregation of races in public schools.)

"I have no anger tonight about the foolish charges . . . that have been leveled against me in these dark, descending hours of the opposition's star." (On the eve of a successful political campaign.)

Subtle changes

Thousands upon thousands of sentences like those rolled off the tongue of Mr. McKeldin. Those who heard some of them

crat J. Harold Grady by a record 81,000 votes.

Republicans who hated his nonconformity immediately turned against him. He was publicly snubbed by being stricken from the invitation list of the state Young Republicans convention.

Mr. McKeldin took that snub in stride, continuing to fill scores of speaking engagements in various parts of the country and striving to re-establish himself as a practicing lawyer.

He had no taste for the role of elder statesman, and if truth be known, welcomed that snub as an opportunity to break away from the job of leader of a political party.

Riding through the entire McKeldin life was his yearning for an evangelistic pulpit.

From the start, he wanted to become a minister, but early poverty killed that ambition. His later actions reflected that religious fervor that was never dimmed.

Mr. McKeldin was born November 20, 1900, on Stockholm (now Ostend) street. He was one of 11 children of a stonecutter turned-policeman with a propensity for the bottle.

One of his earliest and deepest impressions came one day in Bennett Memorial Church as he watched his father march up to the mourner's bench and swear off liquor.

Although he was but 10 at the time, he vowed never to touch the stuff, himself. And, despite his stand against prohibition, he never allowed a drop to enter his home.

Won degree in 1925

Young McKeldin went directly from grammar school to a $20-a-month job as an office boy in a bank. That same day, he enrolled in a night course at Baltimore City College—the first in a long succession of night courses that eventually

speeches as "name-calling and a disruptive, un-American tirade."

Pressure on taverns

He jawboned owners of high-rise apartments where CORE was threatening a lie-in demonstration, and he steadily mounted pressure on tavern owners to serve blacks.

CORE leaders repeatedly found their hottest symbolic issues pre-empted by the mayor's own efforts to win co-operation from the white businessmen who were the civil rights leaders' targets.

When September brought relief from the heat and from the tensions, the mayor privately ranked the successful campaign for racial peace with the sweetest of his political victories—his election in 1963 to a second term as mayor.

Exactly four years before, he had taken the worst licking ever handed a major candidate for mayor. Seemingly, he had reached the end of his political road.

Against heavy odds

But when the time came to choose a Republican candidate for mayor in the next election, his party turned to him as the only member of the GOP who had any chance at all of ending 16 years of Democratic monopoly at City Hall.

Mr. McKeldin turned to the late M. William Adelson, the man who had masterminded most of his campaigns and who had squeezed and wangled his most vital bills and appointments through the Democratic City Council and Legislature.

will never forget the accent that gave them a pure-McKeldin flavor—an accent that changed subtly to fit the particular audience.

On speaking tours for Republican candidates, the accent could start in eastern Pennsylvania resembling the clipped tones of Harvard College, return in Baltimore to the familiar approximation of a Scottish burr and become a gentlemanly Southern drawl by the time he reached Virginia.

Jealous of his reputation for oratory, Mr. McKeldin called upon some of Maryland's best-known scholars and writers for his speeches.

The late Judge Simon E. Sobeloff worked on many, and the late Albert Quinn, who later became a WBAL-TV newscaster, wrote many others, including a famous line denouncing the Truman administration as "the pusillanimous potentates of the Potomac." Gerald W. Johnson, the Baltimore writer, wrote non-political speeches for him for many years.

At least as important to him as his writers—and his political savant — was "Mrs. Mom," Mildred K. Momberger, a secretary whose work shifted with Mr. McKeldin's from public halls to private law offices and whose workday was never shorter than his, which often ran as long as 16 hours. "Nothing happens around here without Mrs. Momberger," he often said.

led—in 1925—to a degree in law from the University of Maryland.

It was during that stint as bank office boy (with gravedigging at $2.50 a day while on vacation) that he met Honolulu Claaire Manzer, a fellow employee.

They were married in 1924, while Mr. McKeldin was employed by the Fidelity and Deposit Company to give pep talks to its agents throughout the country. They had two children — Claire and Theodore Roosevelt, Jr.

Mr. McKeldin got into politics in 1927 by volunteering his speaking services to the late William F. Broening, the Republican candidate for mayor.

He spoke so often and so eloquently that they were calling him the "boy orator" and he was becoming nearly as well known as the candidate.

Mr. Broening was elected and promptly named the 27-year-old Mr. McKeldin who, just two weeks before had hung out his lawyer's shingle, to be his secretary, or "assistant mayor."

Elected mayor in 1943

Mr. McKeldin is still remembered for the hundreds of speeches he made during the four years that followed. He went out of office with Mr. Broening in 1931, by then established as a power within the GOP.

Mr. Adelson probed the weaknesses created by the Democrats pre-election maneuvering and found a boss here and a machine there that would quietly accept Mr. McKeldin.

He came through, against heavy odds, in a squeaker.

"I'm going to be a good mayor," he confided to a friend after the returns were in. "I have to be a good mayor. I owe so much to so many people who have confidence in me.

"Anyway, it's a job I love."

As a matter of fact, Mr. McKeldin loved any job he tackled.

He loved life as he loved to talk.

Born in South Baltimore

And he talked his way through a life that started in the poverty-stricken South Baltimore policeman's home of many children and was culminated first by an eight-year (1951-1959) residence in Government House, in Annapolis, then by the soul-satisfying election to a second term as mayor.

His gift for oratory and the spirit of a frustrated evangelist helped pave the way for his rise from office boy, to part-time grave digger, to clerk in a banking house, to counselor-at-law, to secretary to a mayor, to mayor, then governor and an international reputation and finally, to chief executive of his native city again.

Mr. McKeldin left an imprint

Untold myriads of Marylanders had shaken the McKeldin campaign hand which was out-thrust in campaigns from Girdletree, in lower Worcester county, to Accident in the mountains of Garrett county.

Pulpits by the hundred were occupied by the deeply religious Mr. McKeldin during his long public career. He was a man who could be completely sincere in presenting a rosary to a Catholic and a King James New Testament to a Protestant before donning a skull cap to enter a synagogue for Rosh Hoshana services.

Politicians will remember him as the one Republican above all others who was able to get along with legislatures and a City Council under firm control of the Democrats.

Many of his key appointments went to members of the opposite party.

In fact, Mr. McKeldin had more fights with Republicans than he did with the other side. He had an abiding distaste for what he was fond of calling "that antediluvian, mossback, old-crow wing" of the GOP and had been known to refer to himself as a "left-wing Republican."

Beaten by Grady

After 1958 and a Democratic landslide, Mr. McKeldin often warned that his own party would shrink on the political vine unless it "liberalized itself."

He, himself, was a victim of the Democratic trend in 1959, when he sought to become mayor again, and the man who won four times despite his Republican label lost to Demo-

He made his first run for mayor in 1939, and was beaten by Howard W. Jackson, the Democratic incumbent, by 24,000 votes.

In 1942, Mr. McKeldin made the first of two unsuccessful bids for the governorship, but made it for mayor the follow-

ing year by beating Mr. Jackson by 20,251 votes, the biggest majority ever given a Republican.

As a wartime mayor, Mr. McKeldin could do little but keep essential services running and, in the immedite postwar period and its shortages, help draw plans for a new era.

He also brought down upon himself the wrath of the GOP "regulars" by giving some of the top municipal jobs to Democrats, and they sought to trip him up in 1946, when he made his second try for the governorship.

Mr. McKeldin licked the Republican they put against him *in the gubernatorial primary* so badly, though, that he was never again the object of an attempted primary "purge."

The Republican lost the general election that followed to William Preston Lane, and settled back to serving the one year remaining of his term as mayor.

Knowing full well that the Democrats, with their 4-to-1 registration bulge over the Republicans, were united, thus killing off his chance for reelection, he quietly bowed out of the picture temporarily when his term ended in 1947.

In the meantime, Governor Lane, confronted with tremendous postwar money problems, jammed a sales tax through the General Assembly.

That gave Mr. McKeldin an issue on which to angle for the governorship for a third time.

He stumped the state in 1950, promising to first cut, then eventually abolish, the then-unpopular 2 per cent sales tax—and was elected governor by a landslide 93,000 majority over Mr. Lane, who had bid for a second term.

As governor, Mr. McKeldin found out quickly he could not cut the sales tax. In fact, during the last year in office, the 2 per cent levy became a 3 per cent one, and the state income tax also was raised 50 per cent.

Holy Land for visits to the shrines of Christendom.

He also was a founder of the Baltimore Junior Chamber of Commerce in 1933 and served as its second president a year later. He started what is now the Santa Claus Anonymous campaign for Christmas gifts for poor children.

But he never neglected his real job—governing his native state.

Only a man with the energy of the 200-pound 6-footer could have carried the burden he shouldered for years. And only a man who, like Mr. McKeldin, could relax completely when the need arose, could have put *in his 80-hour weeks* without end.

He was a complete extrovert who gave of himself, let himself go so completely that some of those who did not know him well were inclined to label him as somewhat of a clown. Nothing was further from the truth.

He was deadly serious when he got down to business—when, for example, he was striving against a school lobby that demanded that the state use more of its funds for teachers' pay. Mr. McKeldin believed firmly that the pay question was primarily the responsibility of the subdivisions.

He was completely sincere, too, when he sought desperately for reasons to commute death sentences, probably knowing full well that his long series of commutations would reflect against him at the polls. But he did not believe in capital punishment.

Loved rough-and-tumble

Although the going was rough at times, no Maryland governor got more sheer fun from his job than did Mr. McKeldin. He loved meeting people and talking with and to them; the rough-and-tumble of politics.

stead of Democrat Thomas D'Alesandro, the 1959 incumbent who had become, like himself, an "old face" in politics, he found himself pitted in the general election against J. Harold Grady, a "new face" with the glamorous background of a former FBI agent.

And, in consequence, Mr. McKeldin took the worst licking ever administered a candidate for mayor.

He took that licking gracefully, as he had taken past honors gracefully, and, with his interest in practically everything unimpaired, went ahead to make his speeches, *distribute his autographed pictures,* add to his collection of antiques and gold coins, and build up his law practice.

Kept well aloof

He kept well aloof from city and state politics during much of that 3½-year hiatus.

Then the Democrats started *maneuvering.* Mr. Grady resigned as mayor in December, 1962, to become a judge of the Supreme Bench of Baltimore.

Philip H. Goodman, president of the City Council, was elevated automatically to mayor, and it became evident he would seek an elective term.

The Republican leadership, casting about for someone to oppose Mr. Goodman, held a series of meetings.

Each time, the name of Mr. McKeldin would come up. He was too much of a "liberal" for some of those leaders.

But the more they talked, the more support Mr. McKeldin got.

He, himself, let it be known he would like to be mayor again, but made it clear he would have to have the support of his party.

Finally, the Republican State Central Committee, at a formal meeting, voted overwhelmingly to ask him to make the run.

In reply to criticism of his 1950 pledge, Mr. McKeldin would say simply, "I made a mistake."

Perhaps his two most significant accomplishments as governor were an overhaul of state budgetary procedures and the formulation of a gigantic postwar roads building and reconstruction program.

The most significant personal event that happened to Mr. McKeldin during his first term as governor was his early jump on the Eisenhower bandwagon and his placing of Mr. Eisenhower's name into nomination at the 1952 GOP convention.

As a result, he was admitted for the first time into national counsels of the Republican party, and, in fact, narrowly missed being tapped as Mr. Eisenhower's runing mate for vice president in 1952.

Later his influence within the Eisenhower administration waned, but he nevertheless continued to nurse a yen for the vice presidency.

A steady traveler

As governor, his opportunities for public speaking were enhanced immeasurably. He would catch a plane at a whipstitch to give an Israel Bond drive speech in Los Angeles, or a Republican campaign oration in Maine, or a pro-desegregation discourse in Atlanta.

He went abroad regularly—to Israel, to Germany for University of Maryland Overseas Branch commencements, to Liberia as guest of that government, to Rome and the

He got a big kick out of handing out diplomas, dressing in the McKeldin kilts for a St. Andrew's Society haggis dinner—and pushing for legislation he thought would benefit Maryland.

He was an exuberant campaigner, one who could use bare knuckles when the necessity arose.

Mr. McKeldin demonstrated that in 1954, when he ran for re-election against Dr. H. C. Byrd, former University of Maryland president. That was one of the roughest campaigns in recent state history, but he came out of it with energy unimpaired, ready to dig in for another four years.

The amount of legislation he was able to get through Democratic legislatures was remarkable. And, although more of his vetoes were overridden than those of any other Twentieth Century Maryland governor, his "must" bills, in the main, had a way of sliding through to passage.

Switch with Beall

Mr. McKeldin was limited to two consecutive terms as governor. He wanted to try to switch jobs with Senator J. Glenn Beall, Sr., a fellow Republicaan, after 1953. But senator Beall demurred and ran successfully for re-election.

So Mr. McKeldin had no place to turn except Baltimore and a try to get his old job of mayor back.

He figured that an upset win for that post would enhance his chances for a crack at the Republican vice presidential nomination in 1960.

But it was not to be. In-

A few days later, Mr. McKeldin filed for the GOP nomination. He brushed aside token primary opposition, then got down to brass tacks against Mr. Goodman.

Campaigning on his record as governor and wartime mayor and raising the cry of "bossism" at City Hall, Mr. McKeldin was already making headway when his big break came.

The Republican candidate for city comptroller resigned less than a month before the balloting. In his stead, Mr. McKeldin persuaded Hyman A. Pressman, the self-appointed watchdog over city affairs who had been narrowly beaten in the Democratic primay contest for that party's nomination for city comptroller, to become the Republican candidate for the post.

Appeals to voters

That "fusion ticket" caught the fancy of the voters, and Mr. McKeldin and Mr. Pressman went on to nose out their opponents in the general election.

Thomas D'Alesandro 3d, the "regular" Democrat who was a landslide winner of an elective term as City Council president, was quick to make a

working agreement with Mr. McKeldin.

And the new administration got off to a harmonious start at the top, at least despite the fact that Mr. McKeldin was the one Republican in a city government in which all other elective jobs were held by Democrats.

Mr. McKeldin proposed the Historic Park which is now taking shape in downtown Baltimore. It includes the Carroll-Caton mansion, the Flag House, Shot Tower, St. Vincent de Paul Church and other buildings of historic interest.

The new City Charter he approved in 1964 had such important provisions as creation of an all-embracing Department. D'Alesandro 3d won the mayoral election, and frequently sought his predecessor's counsel. In 1971 he appointed Mr. McKeldin to the city Zoning Board, a post he held until his death.

Mr. McKeldin was one of 11 children, but is survived by one brother, James Raymond McKeldin, and one sister, Miss Theresa McKeldin, of Baltimore.

He is also survived by his wife, and by two children, Mrs. Peter Ziegler, of Upper Marlboro, and Theodore R. McKeldin, Jr., of Baltimore, and by four grandchildren, Erick and Theodora Ziegler, and Caroline Stuart and Theodore R. McKeldin 3d.

ment of Finance, a requirement for program budgeting, provision for a capital improvement program and establishment of a Department of Hospitals.

Although he first came on the national scene with his 1952 nomination of Dwight Eisenhower, that was not his last such appearance.

Supported Johnson

At the 1964 GOP convention, Mr. McKeldin seconded Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller's nomination. But in the election he bolted the Republican party for the only time in his life to support Democrat Lyndon B. Johnson against Barry M. Goldwater because of remarks about immigrants attributed to Representative William E. Miller, Mr. Goldwater's running mate.

President Johnson expressed his gratitude with various honors and appointments, including designation as special ambassador for the Philippines presidential inauguration in 1965 and as a member of the United States observer group for the 1967 South Vietnamese elections.

President Johnson also named him to the planning council of the White House conference "To Fulfill These Rights," and to the Indian Claims Commission.

In 1967, Thomas J.