

Diversions

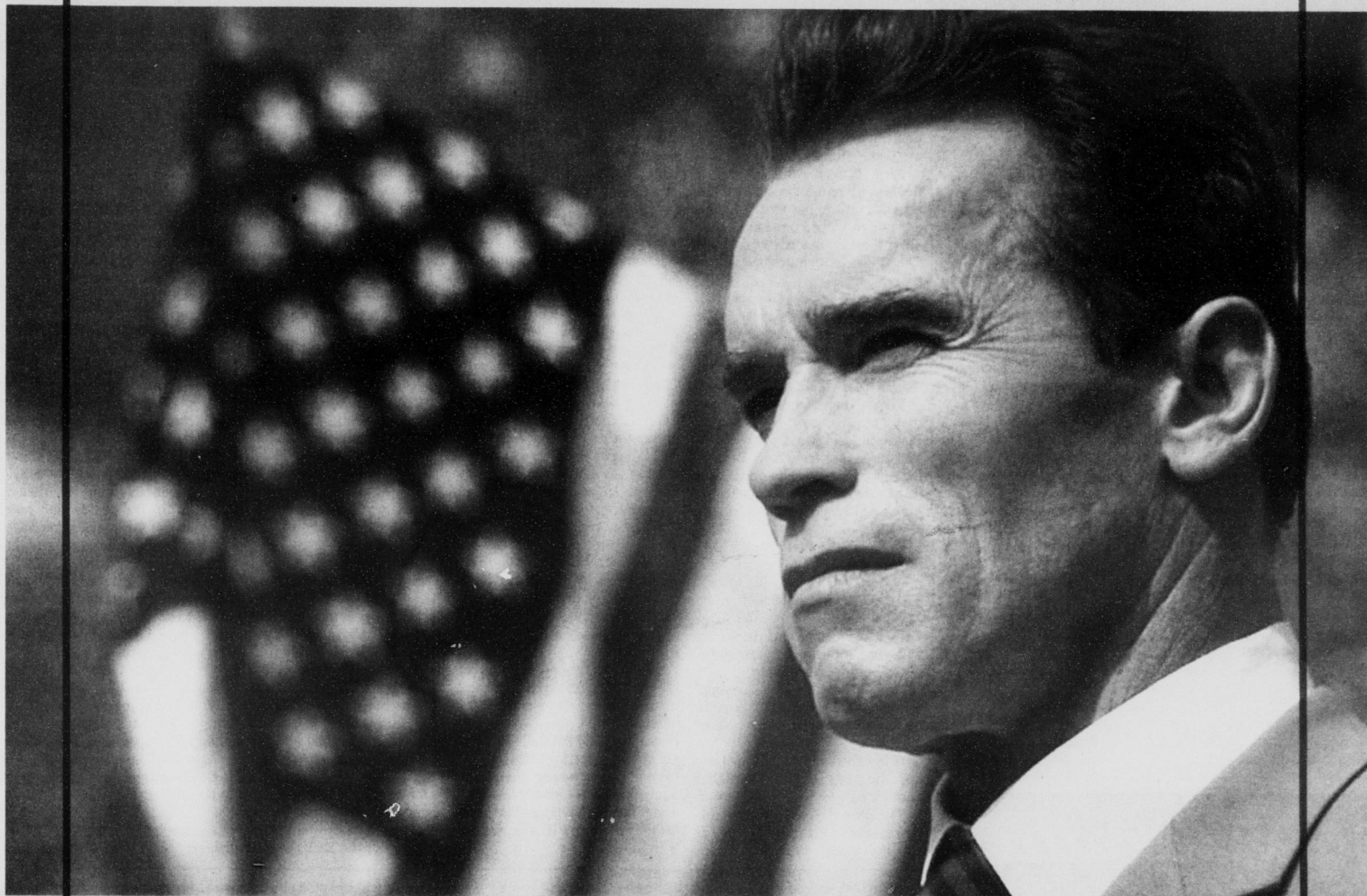
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INSIDE DIVE ■ FANGS FOR THE MEMORIES ... Beckinsale pops more than a cap in 'Underworld.' PAGE 7 ■ FIRE IT UP! ... Thursday leaves emo fans weeping (surprise! surprise!) with 'War.' PAGE 6

"All politicians want to be rock stars and all rock stars want to be politicians." FRANKLIN GILLIAM, UCLA PROFESSOR



Arnold Schwarzenegger has reached international icon status through years of work in Hollywood but now focuses his superstar muscle on winning the California recall election. COURTESY OF WWW.JOINARNOLD.COM

THE RUNNING MAN

Hollywood stars seek to shift fields by using name recognition to gain political office

BY PHILIP MCFEE ASSISTANT ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

Chances are, if any American hears "Schwarzenegger" nowadays, the state that comes to mind no longer will be a militaristic one ruled by machines.

Think more sunny.

Politicians and entertainers run parallel lines — ones that might be growing more convergent.

Nixon had the Turtles and the Temptations play at the White House in 1969.

The same year, future U.S. Sen. Sonny Bono's movie "Chastity" suffered poor returns at the box office.

"It's like the old saying: All politicians want to be rock stars and all rock stars want to be politicians," said Franklin Gilliam, professor of political science at the University of California-Los Angeles.

Exercising control over the U.S. public through a medium other than the box office might be a draw for entertainers who seek political office.

George Rabinowitz, a UNC professor of political science, nailed down the entertainer-politician vertex.

"What entertainers and politicians have in common is they both have to present themselves to a large mass of people in a way that will make them attractive."

Clint Eastwood successfully ran for mayor in Carmel, Calif., banking in at the state's voting booths and box offices.

As for gubernatorial hopeful Schwarzenegger, the road to office isn't lined with Golden Globes.

"Just because you're a big entertainer doesn't guarantee a victory in politics," said Jonathan Alter, writer of Newsweek magazine's "Between the Lines" column.

"The smart ones talk about policy," he continued. "He hasn't yet shown that he's got more."

Analysts see the point of convergence for stars breaking into politics as an even blend of celebrity-built name recognition and policy.

Rabinowitz frequently stressed the importance of a supporting cast, so to speak.

"Name recognition is a necessary, but not sufficient aspect," he said.

"(Their success) depends on a mix of their own knowledge and experience and the ... staff they surround themselves with."

Two-term President Ronald Reagan immediately stands as the ideal mix of charisma and policy.

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COURTESY OF THE WORLD WRESTLING FEDERATION

Jesse 'The Body' Ventura managed to redefine his boa-wearing, bad-boy image earned in the World Wrestling Federation to body slam all competition in the 1998 Minnesota governor's race.



COURTESY OF UNIVERSAL CITY STUDIOS INC.



COURTESY OF GUNTHER

Sonny Bono (above) reached national fame as a singer, movie star and mayor. Ronald Reagan (left) went from the bright lights of Hollywood to the bigwigs of the White House.

ENTERTAINERS IN POLITICS

1966

Ronald Reagan, star of many midcentury silver screen gems such as "The Killers" (1964), is elected to serve as governor of California.

1977

Jerry Springer becomes mayor of Cincinnati. After a failed bid for Ohio governor, he wins 10 Emmy's as a newscaster before starting his fiery talk show.

January 20, 1981

Reagan is sworn in as the 40th president of the United States of America after routing Jimmy Carter, beating him 489-49 in the Electoral College.

April 4, 1986

A new sheriff struts into town as Clint Eastwood, writer, director and star of several legendary westerns, is elected mayor of Carmel, Calif.

November 3, 1998

Jesse "The Body" Ventura goes from wrestling with the likes of Hulk Hogan and Andre The Giant to win the Minnesota governorship.

1994

Sonny Bono of "Sonny and Cher" fame is elected to the U.S. House of Representatives after a stint as mayor of Palm Springs, Calif.

August 6, 2003

Arnold Schwarzenegger, bodybuilder and action star, announces his candidacy for governor of California on "The Tonight Show With Jay Leno."