

## President Participates in Opening Ceremony for Air Force One Pavilion

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library  
Simi Valley, California  
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Excerpt

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It's appropriate that this symbol of American strength and resilience and optimism has come to rest at the library that bears Ronald Reagan's name. After all, it was President Reagan who always reminded us that when we set our eyes on the horizon, every day is "morning in America." As Nancy Reagan has said, "The Reagan Library is a place the sun will never set on the principles that Ronnie believed in so deeply."

Ronald Reagan's principles started with an abiding belief in the power and in the appeal of liberty. He believed that freedom is the right of every man, woman, and child on Earth. (Applause.) He recognized that freedom was opposed by dangerous enemies, and he understood that America has always prevailed by standing firmly on principles and never backing down in the face of evil. (Applause.)

At the beginning of his presidency, Ronald Reagan declared that the years ahead would be great ones "for the cause of freedom and the spread of civilization." He dismissed communism as "a bizarre chapter in human history whose last pages were being written." For eight years he acted on that conviction, and shortly after he left office, the Berlin Wall came down, the "Evil Empire" collapsed, and the cause of liberty prevailed in the Cold War.

The pavilion that we open today includes a Cold War gallery where a new generation will learn about the great victory for freedom that President Reagan's leadership helped secure. They'll see how President Reagan rallied the world's democracies to defend liberty against the totalitarian aspirations of Soviet communism. They'll see how his strategy and vision secured a free and peaceful Europe. They will learn that the key to victory lay in our resolve to stay in the fight until the fight was won. (Applause.)

As President Reagan put it in his Westminster address, "While our military strength is a prerequisite to peace, the ultimate determinant in the struggle will be not bombs and rockets, but a test of will and ideas, a trial of spiritual resolve, the values we hold, the beliefs we cherish, to which we are dedicated."

Because of Ronald Reagan's leadership, America prevailed in the 20th century's great struggle of wills. And now in this new century, our freedom is once again being tested by determined enemies. The terrorists who attacked us on September the 11th, 2001, are followers of a radical and violent ideology. They exploit the religion of Islam to serve a violent political vision, the establishment of a totalitarian empire that denies all political and religious freedom. These extremists distort the idea of jihad into a call for terrorist murder against Christians and Jews and Hindus, and against Muslims from other traditions who they regard as heretics.

Like the ideology of communism, our new enemy is elitist, led by a self-appointed vanguard of Islamic militants that presume to speak for the Muslim masses. Like the ideology of communism, our new enemy teaches that the innocent can be murdered to serve a political vision. Like the ideology of communism, our new enemy pursues totalitarian aims. Like the ideology of communism, our new enemy is dismissive of free peoples, claiming that men and women who live in liberty are weak and decadent. And like the ideology of communism,

Islamic radicalism is doomed to fail. (Applause.)

It will fail because it undermines the freedom and creativity that makes human progress possible and human societies successful. The only thing modern about our enemy's vision is the weapons they want to use against us. The rest of their grim vision is defined by a warped image of the past, a declaration of war on the idea of progress, itself. And whatever lies ahead in the war against this ideology, the outcome is not in doubt: Those who despise freedom and progress have condemned themselves to isolation, decline, and collapse. Because free peoples believe in the future, free peoples will own the future. (Applause.)

We didn't ask for this global struggle, but we are answering history's call with confidence and a comprehensive strategy. We're working to prevent the attacks of terrorist networks before they occur. We're determined to deny weapons of mass destruction to outlaw regimes and to their terrorist allies who would use them without hesitation. We're depriving radical groups of support and sanctuary from outlaw regimes. We're stopping the militants from gaining control of any nation which they would use as a home base and a launching pad for terror. And we're draining the militants of future recruits by replacing hatred and resentment with democracy and hope and freedom across the broader Middle East. (Applause.)

We will prevail in the war on terror, because this generation is determined to meet the threats of our time. We understand our duty; we understand our responsibility to the American people. There will be tough moments ahead on this path to victory. Yet, we have confidence in our cause because we have seen America face down brutal enemies before. We have confidence in our cause because we have seen the power of freedom to overcome the dark ideologies of tyranny and terror. And we have confidence in our cause because we believe, as President Ronald Reagan did, that freedom is "one of the deepest and noblest aspirations of the human spirit." (Applause.)

Thank you all for having us. May God bless Ronald Reagan, and may God continue to bless the United States of America. (Applause.)