



06-FYI-0076

11 April 2006

Vandenberg Missile Defense Site Named After President Ronald Reagan

Vandenberg, AFB, CA – Yesterday, the missile defense facilities at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California were formally dedicated as the "Ronald W. Reagan Missile Defense Site."

Former First Lady Nancy Reagan officially dedicated the missile defense site and unveiled a bust and plaque in honor of the late President that will be placed at a site overlooking the missile defense complex and the Pacific Ocean. The ceremony was also attended by Deputy Secretary of Defense Gordon England, former California Governor and U.S. Senator Pete Wilson, Senator Ted Stevens (Alaska), Vice Commander of Air Force Space Command Lt. Gen. Frank Klotz, Director of the Missile Defense Agency (MDA) Lt. Gen. Henry "Trey" Obering, and founder of the Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance (MDAA) Riki Ellison.

"It is an honor and a privilege to pay a tribute to one of my heroes," said Secretary England. He also said that it is critical for President Reagan's legacy to live on and therefore, we must strive to keep his dedication to peace and freedom alive.

"It was President Reagan's vision that now allows the military to protect the United States from long-range missile attacks, and that is why his name is so appropriate for Vandenberg's missile defense facilities," said Lt. Gen. Obering.

Mrs. Reagan, Lt. Gen. Obering and Mr. Ellison unveiled the bust and plaque while President Reagan's voice filled the room with a recording from his speech on March 23, 1983 that engraved on the plaque: "Wouldn't it be better to save lives than to avenge them? Are we not capable of demonstrating our peaceful intentions by applying all of our abilities and our ingenuity to achieving a truly lasting stability? I think we are indeed. Indeed, we must."

Nancy Reagan called the ceremony a beautiful gesture to her late husband, who died in 2004. The former First Lady got a standing ovation from a crowd of about 1,000 military men and women.

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