



Ronald Reagan

CENTER ON CIVILITY
AND DEMOCRACY

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► A MESSAGE FROM FRED RYAN

America 250 and the Enduring Truths of 1776

As America approaches the 250th anniversary of the [Declaration of Independence](#), we are called to both celebrate and reflect on the principles that gave rise to our nation, and, just as importantly, to recommit ourselves to carrying those principles forward for the next 250 years.

When the Founders appealed to the “Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God,” they were making a claim that remains radical even now. They argued that some truths are self-evident: that all are created equal and have unalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Government, they argued, exists to secure those rights, deriving its just powers from the consent of the governed. These words were not just meant for a particular moment in history a few hundred years ago. They were a standard meant to endure.

President Ronald Reagan made it his goal to preserve that standard. Throughout his public life, he returned again and again to the Founding principles. Ronald Reagan believed deeply that America’s strength rested in “We the People,” and that a free society depended on citizens capable of self-government. He was confident that ordered liberty, moral restraint, and democratic consent could still guide a modern nation. In rhetoric and example alike, he showed how enduring principles could be applied to contemporary challenges without surrendering either conviction or civility.

Carrying on that spirit, the Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Institute is marking our country’s once-in-a-generation anniversary by inviting Americans to engage more deeply with the ideas that gave rise to the nation. From May through September 2026, the Ronald Reagan Library will host an exhibition featuring rare historical objects from the Founding era and beyond, tracing the American story from the decision to declare independence through the generations that followed. As part of its America 250 programming, the Foundation has partnered with the New West Symphony on a [new symphonic work](#) that pairs President Reagan’s speeches with music from his Hollywood films. Together, these experiences encourage reflection on how liberty has been tested, defended, and renewed over time, and on the responsibilities that accompany that inheritance.

Conversations through the Foundation’s Center on Civility and Democracy have likewise explored the contemporary relevance of the founding from different angles. In our

[discussion with Ken Burns](#) on his recent PBS documentary [The American Revolution](#), we explored how the authors of the Declaration aligned around deep truths even in a moment of profound division, and how its words have served as a moral anchor capable of holding a diverse nation together.

That inquiry continued with a conversation in our [Informed Patriotism Series with Walter Isaacson](#), whose recent book [The Greatest Sentence Ever Written](#) centers on the Declaration's most famous sentence and the enduring meaning of its claims about equality, rights, and the consent of the governed. Together, these conversations reflect CCD's conviction that democracy is not self-sustaining, but relies on civil discourse, an informed citizenry, and strong, trusted institutions.

As part of this ongoing reflection, we are pleased to share a guest column from Keith Krach, CEO of [Freedom 250](#). Drawing on his work telling America's story at this pivotal moment, Mr. Krach offers an his view on the enduring relationship between civility and democracy and an optimistic vision for how we moved forward together.

America's 250th anniversary is a recommitment to the extraordinary experiment in human government begun in 1776. Ronald Reagan renewed faith in its promise. It now falls to us citizens to secure those truths once more for our time, and for the generations to come.



► GUEST CONTRIBUTOR MR. KEITH KRACH

Freedom at 250: A Call to Renewal

The United States is approaching a milestone that comes only once in a nation's lifetime: the 250th anniversary of its founding.

President Trump pledged that this anniversary would be recognized in a way worthy of our history, our values, and our future. To help carry that vision forward at a national scale, he launched Freedom 250 – a public-private partnership designed not simply to commemorate the past, but to mobilize the country for what comes next.

For Americans, this is a moment to reflect. For the world, it is a moment to take notice.

[READ THE FULL COLUMN HERE](#)



▶ MARK YOUR CALENDAR

👉 **Apr 28th 5:30PM – A Common Ground Forum: *Beyond the Talking Points and the Case for Civil Disagreement***

Two legends of political commentary – Hugh Hewitt and Ruth Marcus – will sit down together to discuss how political media has evolved over the past several decades, the pressures facing journalists and commentators today, and how figures on the left and right can engage one another without sacrificing conviction or credibility.

[Attend Virtually ▶](#)

🏈 **June 8-9th – The Rose Bowl World Sportsmanship Summit**

Join CCD and the Rose Bowl Institute as we debut our *Better Rivals Initiative*, where the worlds of sports and civics combine to bring out the best in each other. Just days before 2026 World Cup events begin in Los Angeles, this landmark event will unite some of the world’s most influential voices across sport, culture, media, and global leadership—including Olympic champions, World Cup legends, Hall of Famers, award-winning actors, industry power brokers, and emerging youth leaders—for unprecedented conversations on how the power of sportsmanship shapes society in a rapidly changing world.

[Get More Information and Buy Tickets Here ▶](#)

If you have ideas related to this newsletter, please share them with us.

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▶ RECENT HIGHLIGHTS

📖 **Feb 23rd – The Informed Patriotism Series: The Greatest Sentence Ever Written**

What if a single sentence could explain America’s past — and point the way to its future? In this dynamic conversation at the Ronald Reagan Library, Walter Isaacson unpacks “We hold these truths...” word by word, revealing the fierce debates, careful edits, and moral contradictions behind it — and why it still shapes everything from Lincoln to Ronald Reagan to today’s divided politics. It’s a timely, thought-provoking discussion about the American Dream, common ground, and whether we can still “hang together” — one you won’t want to miss.

[Watch the Discussion on YouTube ▶](#)

[Buy an Autographed Book ▶](#)

Newt's World Podcast

Fred sat down with conservative champion Newt Gingrich for a wide-ranging conversation on what President Reagan taught about “principled civility” — how to hold firm convictions while still letting opponents “leave the room with dignity.” They dig into why our politics turned zero-sum (outrage media, social media incentives, collapsing trust, and civic illiteracy) and share memorable Ronald Reagan stories that feel uncannily relevant right now.

[Listen Here ▶](#)

Op-Ed Alert – *“From the Olympic Village to Little League fields, sports still hold America together”*

At a moment when many Americans fear the country is pulling apart, we make the case that sports — from the Olympic stage to hometown Little League fields — still show us how to compete without tearing each other down. The habits and lessons learned in sports — discipline, respect and shared purpose — are the very qualities our democracy needs most right now.

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Promoting Constructive Solutions to Restore
and Renew American Democracy.



Ronald Reagan Center on Civility and Democracy
850 16th Street NW, Washington, DC 20006
reaganfoundation.org