

John Heubusch ([00:02](#)):

Welcome everyone. My name is John Heubusch and I have the honor of being the Executive Director of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Institute. Let me start by saying that I have had a lot of memorable experiences in my time here, but it is not every day, as you can imagine, that we get to cut the ribbon for an M1 Abrams tank. Truth be told, I thought I was going to be allowed to fire it once or twice, but I see that it's not in my remarks. So it must have been vetoed by a neighbor that way.

John Heubusch ([00:43](#)):

But seriously, I know that all of you are aware that President Reagan's defense policies could be summed up in a single phrase, peace through strength. Well, to Ronald Reagan this is what peace through strength looked like.

John Heubusch ([01:04](#)):

Among such defense experts that are here, I do not have to tell you that it was tanks just like this, and just like the F-117 stealth fighter and the F-14 up on this hill, that were part of the strategic military buildup that defined Ronald Reagan's presidency and helped to win the Cold War.

John Heubusch ([01:28](#)):

The M1 Abrams tanks that rolled off the line alongside this one conducted military exercises in Eastern Europe, and then were tested in combat during Operation Desert Storm, as well as the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Tanks like this were manufactured in Ohio and Michigan by General Dynamics, a testament to the ingenuity of American manufacturing, and a reminder of why a strong industrial base is not just an economic, but a national security imperative.

John Heubusch ([02:08](#)):

We are so grateful to the United States Army and in particular to Audrey Clarke of the Army Donation Office, and General Dynamics for donating this tank to the Reagan Library, as part of our evolving Peace Through Strength exhibit.

John Heubusch ([02:27](#)):

I would also like to recognize the Commanding General of Fort Irwin, Brigadier General Taylor, who is with us today. For those not from this area, Fort Irwin, our local army base, is located just a few hours away. They were so kind to adopt our Abrams tank. They came out just a few weeks ago and painted all of the emblems that you see on the sides of the tank. The six outstanding soldiers who you see behind me are from Fort Irwin and are helping us in today's program.

John Heubusch ([03:03](#)):

Now I'd like to turn it over to Danny Deep, president of General Dynamics Land Systems. Danny.

Danny Deep ([03:14](#)):

Well, thank you very much. Madam Secretary, Chief, all of the honored guests. I can't tell you what a thrill it is to be here representing General Dynamics for this dedication ceremony.

Danny Deep ([03:26](#)):

The 1972, about 50 years ago, ARMOR magazine, the lead article was the death of the tank. The author that wrote the article clearly got it wrong. We hadn't even designed the Abrams tank. Anybody who has used this piece of equipment understands the decisiveness and capability that it brings, and recognizes that it's an unfair fight when you come to an Abrams tank.

Danny Deep ([03:55](#)):

I can tell you that this version is an earlier version and is a representation of courageous leaders and brilliant men and women who came up with a concept that, even today, continues to be modernized. Eight generations later, the Abrams main battle tank is the most dominant capability on the ground, on the earth.

Danny Deep ([04:20](#)):

So on behalf of General Dynamics, I want to thank all of you. We're happy to be part of this. Thank you for your dedication and your leadership in the defense of our nation. Thank you.

John Heubusch ([04:36](#)):

Thanks Danny and General Dynamics for your generosity. I'd now like to invite on the stage General James McConville, Chief of Staff of the United States Army, to say a few words. General.

James McConville ([04:52](#)):

Well, thank you, and very honored to be here. On May 27th, 1981, President Reagan spoke at our West Point graduation. He talked about peace through strength, and part of that peace through strength was making sure that our soldiers had what they needed to do their job. It was the big five, and part of the big five was the Abrams tank. Having seen this tank fight in many, many operations, we are very, very blessed to have it, and we're very honored to have it displayed here as the part of the joint force.

James McConville ([05:24](#)):

But one thing that we always remember in the army, it's great that we have great equipment, but it's really about the soldiers. It's the soldiers that we equip with. So I have 30 seconds left and what I want to do is take PFC Chin, come on up here, come on over here. I want you to stand right there. This is a great soldier, and one of the things I have as the Chief of Staff of the Army, I can promote people on the spot. So I'm going to make him a specialist in the United States Army, because he's what it is all about.

James McConville ([06:00](#)):

It's about the soldier.

James McConville ([06:02](#)):

(silence).

John Heubusch ([06:20](#)):

I'd now like to introduce the Secretary of the Army, Secretary Wormuth, who was just so kind to take time out of her busy day to be with us as well. Secretary.

Christine Wormuth ([06:34](#)):

Good morning, everybody. It's great to be with all of you and our friends from the Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and General Dynamics. I will be very brief because frankly it's hard to top promoting a great soldier, which is fantastic.

Christine Wormuth ([06:48](#)):

But I will say, the tank behind us represents a lot of history and it's a powerful symbol of American might. Ronald Reagan was the president, as General McConville said, when the Abrams was first fielded, and just as President Reagan, I think, projected the confidence of the American people when he represented us around the world, tankers passed and present in our army have always had tremendous confidence in the Abrams. It got rave reviews when it was fielded in the early 80s.

Christine Wormuth ([07:18](#)):

It's perhaps our fiercest armored vehicle. It's seen combat in places like Kuwait in the first Gulf War, and then later in Iraq in Operation Iraqi Freedom. It's been upgraded many, many times, as Mr. Deep indicated. It's actually now the latest version is the M1A2 Abram SEP V3, which is a mouthful. But, as we in the army are undertaking our most ambitious modernization effort in the last 40 years, we are focused on fielding a lot of new systems, a lot of next-generation capabilities.

Christine Wormuth ([07:53](#)):

We also have what General McConville and I call enduring capabilities in our arsenal, if you will. And the Abrams behind me very much represents that kind of enduring capability. I think the testament to its continuing utility all these decades later is how many of our allies and partners around the world want to get Abrams into their armies. I was actually just in Poland meeting with the Minister of Defense, talking with them about their interest in purchasing Abrams for their army.

Christine Wormuth ([08:25](#)):

So I can't predict where the next conflict will be, but I have no doubt that this iconic war-fighting vehicle will be in the thick of the fight whenever that conflict comes.

John Heubusch ([08:40](#)):

Thank you, Madam Secretary. I want to now recognize Representative Mike Rogers, Ranking Member of the House Armed Services Committee, for a few words. Congressman.

Mike Rogers ([08:54](#)):

I'm very pleased to be here and seeing this donation and this recognition of this important platform, which is born in the district of one of my new armed services colleagues, Lisa McLean of Michigan. But all those upgrades that the Secretary just talked about happened in my hometown, in the Anniston Army Depot. This platform, for four decades, has been an enduring platform in keeping our nation safe [inaudible 00:09:27], and it will continue to do so. So it's great that it's being honored here and I appreciate you letting me be a part of it.

John Heubusch ([09:37](#)):

Thanks so much, Congressman. And now we are proud to formally dedicate this M1 Abrams tank as the latest addition to the Peace Through Strength exhibit here at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library.

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John Heubusch ([09:51](#)):

(silence).