

Remarks at a Dedication Ceremony for the United States Embassy in
Beijing, China
August 8, 2008

Thank you, sir. Thank you, Mr. President. [Laughter] It is quite an honor to be introduced by your dad. This has got to be a historic moment: father and son, two Presidents, opening up an Embassy. I suspect it's the first, although I must confess, I haven't done a lot of research into the itinerary of the Adams boys. [Laughter]

My dad was a fabulous President. And I tell people one reason why was not only did he know what he was doing, he was a fabulous father.

Mr. Ambassador, honored guests: Laura and I, my brother and my sister are proud to be here with our dad as we open and dedicate this new Embassy.

No doubt, this is an impressive complex. To me it speaks of the importance of our relations with China. It reflects the solid foundation underpinning our relations. It is a commitment to strengthen that foundation for years to come.

I thank all those who designed and built the Embassy and all those who work here to advance the interests and values of our great Nation. Dad and I are honored that Councilor Dai has joined us, and Minister Xie; Ambassador Zhou, who, by the way, opened a new Chinese Embassy in Washington, DC, designed by I.M. Pei, a couple weeks ago.

We appreciate our friend Anne Johnson being here, director of the Art in Embassies Program. Dr. Kissinger, thanks for coming.

It takes a special band to open the Embassy. Out of west Texas—Odessa, Texas, for that matter—the Gatlin boys are with us today. I thank the Red Poppies. Thank you for your talent.

And finally, I want to pay tribute to Sandy Randt, who has done a fabulous job as our Ambassador to China. Sandy, thank you and—[applause].

We're proud to be here with those citizens of ours who work at the Embassy, and we say thanks to the Chinese nationals who make our Embassy go as well.

I'm honored to represent the United States at this opening ceremonies of the Olympic Games here in Beijing. And I'm looking forward to cheering our athletes on. Mr. Ambassador, I'm not making any predictions about medal counts, but I can tell you the U.S. athletes are ready to come and compete in the spirit of friendship.

You know, during my last visit here, I had the opportunity to break in the mountain biking course. I was so proud of my efforts, I told Laura I was thinking about entering the competition myself. [Laughter] She reminded me they don't give any medals for last place. [Laughter]

Tonight the Olympic torch will light the home of an ancient civilization with a grand history. Thousands of years ago, the Chinese people developed a common language and unified a great nation. China became the center for art and literature, commerce and philosophy. China advanced the frontiers of knowledge in medicine, astronomy, navigation, engineering, and many other fields. And the Chinese are even said to have invented the parachute, something for which the 41st President is very grateful.

We share a long history. The first American ship arrived in China just after the year we won our independence. World War II, Americans and Chinese fought side by side to liberate this land from Imperial Japan. We all remember very clearly, Dr. K, when President Nixon came to Beijing to begin a new era of dialogue between our nations. You might remember that yourself. [Laughter]

Today, the United States and China have built a strong relationship, rooted in common interests. China has opened its economy and begun to unleash the entrepreneurial spirit of its people. America will continue to support China on the path toward a free economy.

We're also cooperating to fight pandemic diseases and respond to natural disasters. And through the six-party talks, we're working together to ensure that the Korean Peninsula is free of nuclear weapons.

The relationship between our nations is constructive and cooperative and candid. We'll continue to be candid about our mutual global responsibilities. We must work together to protect the environment and help people in the developing world, continue to be candid about our belief that all people should have the freedom to say what they think and worship as they choose. We strongly believe societies which allow the free expression of ideas tend to be the most prosperous and the most peaceful.

Candor is the most effective—is most effective where nations have built a relationship of respect and trust. I've worked hard to build that respect and trust. I appreciate

the Chinese leadership that have worked hard to build that respect and trust. And I thank all those here at the Embassy who are doing the same thing. The people here who work made sacrifices to serve our country. Serving America is noble, and I hope you found it to be rewarding, just like I have.

I'm honored to be with you. I appreciate the honor of dedicating this new Embassy. And I'm looking forward to going to the games. [*Laughter*] God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:10 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to his brother Marvin P. Bush and his sister Dorothy Bush Koch; State Councilor Dai Bingguo, Minister of Finance Xie Xuren, and Ambassador to the U.S. Zhou Wenzhong of China; former Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger; and entertainers Larry Gatlin and the Gatlin Brothers and the Red Poppy Ladies Percussion Ensemble. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of former President George H.W. Bush. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks to the 2008 United States Summer Olympic Team in Beijing *August 8, 2008*

Congratulations for representing the finest nation on the face of the Earth. The honorary captain and I are proud to be with you. We're here to wish you all the very best.

First, I want to say thanks to the U.S. Olympic Committee, chaired by Peter Ueberroth, CEO Jim Scherr, Judge Charles Lee. I wasn't exactly sure what to say to you, except to start with, God, I love our country, and I love what we stand for, and I love being with you.

Laura and I and a lot of our family are here to cheer you on. We're just a handful of a lot of folks who care about you a lot. There are going to be a lot of people pulling for you. We want you to win as many golds as you possibly can.

We appreciate all the hard work you've put in to get to this spot. It's got to be really exciting, thinking about marching in that stadium and representing our country. So I guess all I've got to say is, go for it, give it all you've got, and may God bless you.