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Captive Nations Week, 1982

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

During the past year, we have witnessed another tragic demonstration of the failure of tyranny to compete with the principles of freedom. The imposition of martial law in Poland on December 13, 1981, served as a bitter reminder that the quest for freedom and self-determination can only be restrained by force. It clearly demonstrated the moral bankruptcy of a system which has been unable to earn the support of its population after more than 35 years in power.

The same repression imposed on the Polish people is evidenced in various ways in other captive nations dominated by foreign military power and an alien Marxist-Leninist ideology. The brutal suppression of sovereignty in Afghanistan and the bondage of the captive peoples of Eastern Europe continue. Among the oppressed we must also count the peoples of many nationalities within the Soviet Union itself; they are victims of long decades of repression.

Twenty-three years ago, by a joint resolution approved July 17, 1959, (73 Stat. 212), the Congress authorized and requested the President to proclaim the third week in July as Captive Nations Week.

This week offers Americans an opportunity to honor our Nation's founders whose wisdom and commitment to self-determination and liberty have guided this country for more than 200 years. Let us once again reaffirm our faith that the aspiration for freedom will ultimately prevail over the rule of force and coercion which denies human rights to so many other parts of the world today.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby designate the week beginning July 18, 1982, as Captive Nations Week.

I invite the people of the United States to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities and to reaffirm their dedication to the ideals which unite us and inspire others.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 19th day of July, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and seventh.

Ronald Reagan