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200th Anniversary of the Signing of the Treaty of Paris

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

On September 3, 1983, we celebrate the 200th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Paris, which brought our War of Independence from Great Britain to a successful and formal conclusion.

When our Founding Fathers boldly declared our independence in 1776, our fledgling Nation began a seven-year struggle for its freedom and survival; at no other time in our history has our security and existence been so severely threatened. Yet we emerged from the Revolutionary War a united and sovereign Nation.

In the Treaty of Paris, Britain formally acknowledged the independence of the United States of America. This "American Birth Certificate" inaugurated an era of peace for the new Nation which led to the adoption of the Constitution of the United States of America on September 17, 1787.

It is only fitting that this Treaty was signed in Paris, the capital of our oldest ally, thereby recognizing the extraordinary role France played in securing the independence of the United States in fulfillment of the obligations it assumed in the Franco-American Alliance of 1778.

The American Peace Commissioners who negotiated the Treaty—John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, and John Jay—carried to Paris the aspirations of a peaceful Nation willing and able to defend its sovereignty. The brave Americans who fought for our Nation's independence ensured that Adams, Franklin, and Jay could negotiate from a position of strength to achieve an agreement with just and equitable provisions. Their efforts gained respect for the United States among nations of Europe and the world—an achievement considered the greatest triumph in the history of American diplomacy.

The Treaty of Paris was the first step toward an alliance with Great Britain which has grown stronger through two centuries to become one of our most important alliance relationships. Political, cultural, economic, and defense ties between our two nations are firm and lasting. The solidarity we and all our allies demonstrated at the recent Williamsburg Summit is the heritage of the Treaty of Paris and confirms again our Nation's willingness to pursue peaceful relations and our desire to befriend those others who share our commitment to democracy and liberty.

In tribute to the remarkable accomplishments of the Treaty of Paris, the Congress of the United States, by House Joint Resolution 321, has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation which would designate September 3, 1983, as a day of national celebration of this monumental document.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby designate September 3, 1983, as a day to celebrate the signing of the Treaty of Paris, and I invite the people of this Nation to observe that day with appropriate ceremonies to honor the spirit of peace and liberty which the Treaty represents.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of August, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and eighth.

Ronald Reagan