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Dr. Jonas E. Salk Day, 1985

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

One of the greatest challenges to mankind always has been eradicating the presence of debilitating disease. Until just thirty years ago poliomyelitis occurred in the United States and throughout the world in epidemic proportions, striking tens of thousands and killing thousands in our own country each year.

Dr. Jonas E. Salk changed all that. This year we observe the 30th anniversary of the licensing and manufacturing of the vaccine discovered by this great American. Even before another successful vaccine was discovered, Dr. Salk's discovery had reduced polio and its effects by 97 percent. Today, polio is not a familiar disease to younger Americans, and many have difficulty appreciating the magnitude of the disorder that the Salk vaccine virtually wiped from the face of the earth.

Jonas E. Salk always had a passion for science. It was because of this that he finally chose medicine over law as his career goal. Even after his great discovery, he continued to undertake vital studies and medical research to benefit his fellowman. Under his vision and leadership, the Salk Institute for Biological Studies has been in the forefront of basic biological research, reaping further benefits for mankind and medical science.

In recognition of his tremendous contributions to society, particularly for his role in the epochal discovery of the first licensed vaccine for poliomyelitis, and in celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of its mass distribution, the Congress, by House Joint Resolution 258, has designated May 6, 1985, as "Dr. Jonas E. Salk Day" and authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this event.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 6, 1985, as Dr. Jonas E. Salk Day. I urge the people of the United States to observe the day with appropriate tributes, ceremonies, and activities throughout the Nation and by paying honor, at all times, to this outstanding physician and to his life's work.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this sixth day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and nineth.

Ronald Reagan