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Prayer for Peace Memorial Day, 1986

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Memorial Day is an occasion of special importance to all Americans, because it is a day sacred to the memory of all those Americans who made the supreme sacrifice for the liberties we enjoy. We will never forget or fail to honor these heroes to whom we owe so much. We honor them best when we resolve to cherish and defend the liberties for which they gave their lives. Let us resolve to do all in our power to assure the survival and the success of liberty so that our children and their children for generations to come can live in an America in which freedom's light continues to shine.

The Congress, in establishing Memorial Day, called for it to be a day of tribute to America's fallen, and also a day of national prayer for lasting peace. This Nation has always sought true peace. We seek it still. Our goal is peace in which the highest aspirations of our people, and people everywhere, are secure: peace with freedom, with justice, and with opportunity for human development. This is the permanent peace for which we pray, not only for ourselves but for all generations.

The defense of peace, like the defense of liberty, requires more than lip service. It requires vigilance, military strength, and the willingness to take risks and to make sacrifices. The surest guarantor of both peace and liberty is our unflinching resolve to defend that which has been purchased for us by our fallen heroes.

On Memorial Day, let us pray for peace—not only for ourselves, but for all those who seek freedom and justice.

In recognition of those brave Americans to whom we pay tribute today, the Congress, by joint resolution approved May 11, 1950 (64 Stat. 158), has requested the President to issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe each Memorial Day as a day of prayer for permanent peace and designating a period on that day when the people of the United States might unite in prayer.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby designate Memorial Day, Monday, May 26, 1986, as a day of prayer for permanent peace, and I designate the hour beginning in each locality at 11:00 o'clock in the morning of that day as a time to unite in prayer. I urge the press, radio, television, and all other information media to cooperate in this observance.

I also direct all appropriate Federal officials, and request the Governors of the United States and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the appropriate officials of all units of government, to direct that the flag be flown at half-staff during this Memorial Day on all buildings, grounds, and naval vessels throughout the United States and in all areas under its jurisdiction and control, and I request the people of the United States to display the flag at half-staff from their homes for the customary forenoon period.

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

Ronald Reagan