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Days of Remembrance of Victims of the Holocaust

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

The Congress of the United States established the United States Holocaust Memorial Council to create a living memorial to the victims of the Nazi Holocaust. Its purpose: So mankind will never lose memory of that terrible moment in time when the awful spectre of death camps stained the history of our world.

When America and its allies liberated those haunting places of terror and sick destructiveness, the world came to a vivid and tragic understanding of the evil it faced in those years of the Second World War. Each of those names—Auschwitz, Buchenwald, Dachau, Treblinka and so many others—became synonymous with horror.

The millions of deaths, the gas chambers, the inhuman crematoria, and the thousands of people who somehow survived with lifetime scars are all now part of the conscience of history. Forever must we remember just how precious is civilization, how important is liberty, and how heroic is the human spirit.

Like the genocide of the Armenians before it, and the genocide of the Cambodians which followed it—and like too many other such persecutions of too many other peoples—the lessons of the Holocaust must never be forgotten.

As part of its mandate, the Holocaust Memorial Council has been directed to designate annual Days of Remembrance as a national, civic commemoration of the Holocaust, and to encourage and sponsor appropriate observances throughout the United States. This year, the national Days of Remembrance will be observed on April 26 through May 3.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby ask the people of the United States to observe this solemn anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi death camps, with appropriate study, prayers and commemoration, as a tribute to the spirit of freedom and justice which Americans fought so hard and well to preserve.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 22nd day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fifth.

Ronald Reagan