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National P.O.W./M.I.A. Recognition Day, 1986

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Courage and sacrifice are no strangers to America. In every war since our first struggle for independence, America's prisoners of war have endured terrible hardships and have been called upon to make extraordinary sacrifices. The bravery, perseverance, and profound devotion to duty of our POWs and MIAs have earned them a place of honor in the hearts of all Americans. Their heroism is an inspiration to future generations. Their spirit of hope and their commitment to the defense of freedom are a claim on our loyalty to them.

All Americans are also deeply moved by the pain and suffering endured by the families and friends of those who remain missing or unaccounted for. We share both their burden and their commitment to secure the release of any U.S. personnel who may still be held against their will, to recover the missing, to resolve the accounting, and to relieve the suffering of our missing servicemen. Until the P.O.W./M.I.A. issue has been resolved, it will continue to be a matter of the highest national priority. As a symbol of this national commitment, the P.O.W./M.I.A. Flag will fly over the White House, the Departments of State and Defense, the Veterans' Administration, and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on September 19, 1986. It will also fly over the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on Memorial Day and Veterans Day.

In order to recognize the special debt all Americans owe to the men and women who gave up their freedom in the service of our country and to reaffirm our commitment to their families, the Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 220, has designated September 19, 1986, as "National P.O.W./M.I.A. Recognition Day," and authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this occasion.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Friday, September 19, 1986, as National P.O.W./M.I.A. Recognition Day. I call on all Americans to join in honoring all former American prisoners of war, those still missing, and their families who have made extraordinary sacrifices on behalf of this country. I also call upon State and local officials and private organizations to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-eighth day of August, 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 eleventh.

Ronald Reagan