

Proclamation 5580 of December 2, 1986

National Aplastic Anemia Awareness Week, 1986

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Aplastic anemia is a potentially fatal disease that results from the bone marrow ceasing to produce formal elements of the blood—the red blood cells, the white blood cells, and the platelets. The disease is responsible for the deaths of 2,000 Americans each year. One-half of the cases of aplastic anemia result from unknown causes. The other half are the result of certain drugs such as anti-inflammatory drugs or anticonvulsant drugs, or chemicals such as benzene or arsenic, or radiation. Aplastic anemia also is a complication of certain anticancer drugs.

Until recently, the onset of aplastic anemia led inexorably to death. Now, however, more and more patients survive the disease. New drug treatments and bone marrow transplantation in certain cases have led to this improving picture.

The hope for the future is research. The Federal government supports a national program of research into the causes, prevention, and treatment of aplastic anemia under the auspices of the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. The scientists in that Institute and in other research laboratories across the country are working to bring to light the hidden secrets of this disease.

In order to focus public attention on and increase awareness of aplastic anemia and other bone marrow diseases, the Congress, by Public Law 99-454, has designated the week of December 1 through December 7, 1986, as "National Aplastic Anemia Awareness Week" 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 the week of December 1 through December 7, 1986, as National Aplastic Anemia Awareness Week. I invite all Americans to join in appropriate activities to assure a better understanding of this rare but serious disease.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this second day of December, 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