IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eighth 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

Proclamation 5588 of December 8, 1986

Wright Brothers Day, 1986

By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation

If any event ever altered the future of mankind radically and irrevocably, it was the manned, engine-powered airplane flight of Orville Wright at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, on December 17, 1903.

Before that day, people could but dream of flight or imitate it by floating in balloons. But forever after, thanks to Orville and Wilbur Wright, man could travel the skies as he had the continents, rivers, and seas throughout the ages.

The benefits of manned flight have been incalculable. Today, our world is linked by a global air transportation system that enables us to travel safely and efficiently virtually anywhere in a matter of hours. Aviation technology has built on the foundations of manned airplane flight to provide advances in science, medicine, and many other fields. And mankind has ventured beyond the skies into space.

Just as the principles of flight that the Wright Brothers harnessed still apply, so too their spirit—invention, exploration, originality, innovation—continues to motivate all those who would expand knowledge for the good of man. We owe the Wright Brothers a debt of gratitude for their invention of engine-powered flight but also for their immortal lesson of independence and determination.

The Congress, by joint resolution of December 17, 1963 (77 Stat. 402; 36 U.S.C. 169), has designated the seventeenth day of December of each year as Wright Brothers Day and requested the President to issue annually a proclamation inviting the people of the United States to observe that day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim December 17, 1986, as Wright Brothers Day, and I call upon the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities, both to recall the accomplishments of the Wright Brothers and to provide a stimulus to aviation in this country and throughout the world.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eighth 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

Proclamation 5589 of December 10, 1986


By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation

On December 15, 1791, our young Nation celebrated the ratification of the Bill of Rights, the first ten amendments to the Constitution of the United States, which gave legal form to the great principles our Founding Fathers had set forth in the Declaration of Independence less than a generation earlier. As we celebrate that occasion some 195 years later, it is well to recall those principles, which endure today as they have for nearly two centuries. They endure because they rest on a simple but profound truth, that each of us is created with equal moral dignity, that every individual is endowed by nature and nature's God with inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. On this foundation of individual rights and self-government our Founding Fathers created a great Nation, setting it on the course of liberty that continues to this day.

As we look around the world, however, we see a very different history. Some nations, to be sure, have followed a course similar to our own and today enjoy the liberty that we Americans have long cherished. But others have never known genuine liberty, while still others, especially in our own century, have lost the liberty they once enjoyed.

Thirty-eight years ago, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. Yet many of the governments that voted for that Declaration are flagrantly ignoring the principles they affirmed on that momentous occasion. The Soviet Union continues its repression of Catholics in Lithuania and Ukraine, and of other religious activists. Hundreds of thousands of Jews are still being denied the right to emigrate, while Soviet armies, for the seventh year now, have brutally repressed the people of Afghanistan. In Berlin, the world marked the 25th year of a wall built not to protect people but to keep them in their place. In Poland, workers will sadly mark the fifth anniversary of martial law and will mourn those who suffered for their defense of human rights.

Unfortunately, no continent has been spared the pain of human rights violations. In South Africa the manifest injustices of the apartheid system of racial discrimination persist. Refugees continue to flow from the communist nations of southeast Asia. And the world is listening increasingly to the tragic stories of those who have suffered so long in the Cuban gulags just 90 miles from our shores—and in the emerging gulags of Nicaragua.

Yet despite this reign of repression, there is reason for hope. In our own hemisphere in this decade the movement has been toward freedom, not