

blood vessels develop in the back of the eye, often doing irreparable damage in only weeks or months. Laser treatment can usually stop the destruction and save the remaining vision.

Laser treatment can also save the sight of some people who risk visual loss due to diabetes. The earlier the intervention, the less the potential vision loss.

To encourage our citizens to cherish and protect their sight, the Congress, by joint resolution approved December 30, 1963 (77 Stat. 629, 36 U.S.C. 169a), has authorized and requested the President to proclaim the first week in March of each year as "Save Your Vision Week."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby designate the week beginning March 6, 1988, as Save Your Vision Week. I urge all Americans to participate in this observance by making eye care and eye safety an important part of their lives. I also invite eye care professionals, the communications media, and all public and private organizations committed to the goal of sight conservation to join in activities that will make Americans more aware of the steps they can take to protect their vision.

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

RONALD REAGAN

Proclamation 5772 of February 11, 1988

Lithuanian Independence Day, 1988

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

Seventy years ago, on February 16, 1918, the Lithuanian National Council declared the independence of Lithuania and established the Republic of Lithuania. This restoration of Lithuania's sovereignty was recognized around the world—even by the Soviet Union, in 1920. Lithuania joined the League of Nations in 1921, and for the next two decades Lithuanians enjoyed liberty and self-determination under a government that fostered political and religious freedom for all citizens.

Then, in June 1940, the year after the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the Soviet Union invaded and illegally occupied Lithuania and the other Baltic States. The United States unequivocally condemned this violation of national sovereignty and national integrity, and ever since then our policy has remained consistent. We have never recognized the forcible incorporation of Lithuania into the Soviet Union, and we never will.

Observance of the anniversary of Lithuania's Declaration of Independence is natural for Americans, who faithfully celebrate our own Independence Day each year. America has long been a beacon of hope to Lithuania, because Americans cherish their self-determination, individual liberty, and independence—the God-given rights the Lithuanian

people seek to reclaim in the face of religious and political persecution, forced Russification, and ethnic dilution. It is therefore fitting to show our solidarity with the people of Lithuania.

We join in Lithuania's proud and solemn remembrance of the 70th anniversary of its independence, and together with people the world over we share the spirit and the hope of the Lithuanian people as they commemorate that day. Among the Lithuanian people the spirit of liberty remains unbroken—the spirit of a true leader of her people, Nijole Sadunaite, whose sacrifices for country and conscience continue so courageously to the present day, and who wrote from the Gulag, "Our brief days on earth are not meant for rest, but to participate in the struggle for the happiness of numerous hearts"; the spirit of the freedom marchers of Vilnius, Lithuania's capital, and of Kaunas; the spirit of every time and place where bold sons and daughters remember their heritage and their highest ideals.

To demonstrate our common commitment to the cause of freedom, the Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 39, has designated February 16, 1988, as "Lithuanian Independence Day" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this day.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim February 16, 1988, as Lithuanian Independence Day. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities in reaffirmation of their devotion to the just aspirations of all peoples for self-determination and liberty.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 11th day of February, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twelfth.

RONALD REAGAN

Proclamation 5773 of February 17, 1988

National Visiting Nurse Associations Week, 1988

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

For the last century, visiting nurse associations have sent skilled and dedicated nurses to care for homebound patients throughout our country. Today, approximately 20,000 nurses in nearly 500 associations care each year for nearly a million Americans, adults and children alike. This tradition of caring service has provided indispensable help to countless people and has truly earned visiting nurses the gratitude and the esteem of their countrymen.

Visiting nurse associations have won great professional respect as well for their adherence to the highest standards in offering personalized home health care. Visiting nurses often work under adverse conditions and at personal sacrifice, working long hours and traveling great dis-