

with protection of national security and rights of privacy. As we celebrate free access to information as part of our heritage, let us honor the memory of President Madison for the wisdom and the devotion to the liberty of the American people that were his credo and his way of life.

The Congress, by Public Law 99-539, has designated March 16, 1987, as "Freedom of Information Day" 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 March 16, 1987, as Freedom of Information Day, and I call upon the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate programs and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of March, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and eleventh.

RONALD REAGAN

Proclamation 5621 of March 20, 1987

Afghanistan Day, 1987

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

The people of Afghanistan traditionally celebrate March 21 as the start of their new year. For the friends of the Afghan people, the date has another meaning: it is an occasion to reaffirm publicly our long-standing support of the Afghan struggle for freedom. That struggle seized the attention of the world in December 1979 when a massive Soviet force invaded, murdered one Marxist ruler, installed another, and attempted to crush a widespread resistance movement.

Despite a 7-year reign of terror by over 115,000 Soviet troops, the Soviet attempt to subjugate the Afghans has failed. The puppet Kabul regime remains weak and illegitimate. The resistance movement has fought the Soviet army to a standstill. And the Afghan people, whose support for the resistance is overwhelming, have continued to show an indomitable will to be free.

During the past year, the Afghan people have advanced their cause in a variety of ways. On the political front, the resistance Alliance has grown more cohesive and more effective. One major step in this direction occurred January 17, when the seven Alliance leaders put forward their own comprehensive plan for a free Afghanistan. The Alliance has also become the focal point for the distribution of social services and humanitarian resources inside the country, thereby helping to stem the outflow of refugees and laying the basis for reestablishing a free Afghanistan.

On the battlefield, the resistance has demonstrated growing strength. Notable achievements include an increased ability to counter communist air power, the renewal of heavy military pressure on Kabul, the resurgence of

resistance activity in the north, and the defeat of communist efforts to consolidate control over Kandahar and Herat, Afghanistan's second and third largest cities.

The success of the resistance may well have prompted the Soviets to demonstrate a new interest in the political side of the conflict. While we welcome statements that the Soviets wish to bring about a political settlement and to withdraw their troops, we shall continue to gauge their intentions by the only accurate measurement—their actions.

Thus far, Soviet proposals have lacked realism and substance. They appear to be aimed at deceiving world opinion rather than at seeking peace and self-determination. A cease-fire without reference to the withdrawal of Soviet troops is meaningless. National reconciliation with a communist-dominated government as its starting point and its foreordained result is a sham that the resistance, the refugees, and the people of Afghanistan will never accept.

Acts of war by the Soviet Union and its Afghan allies totally belie conciliatory intentions. As peace talks began in Geneva last month, communist aircraft swept into Pakistani territory three times in as many days and bombed refugee camps and crowded bazaars, killing over 100 people and wounding 250. Around the same time, terror bombings inside Pakistan—notably a February 19 blast outside an Afghan refugee office and a nearby school—also started to increase. These acts represent a crude attempt to dispirit the resistance and to intimidate Pakistan into abandoning its courageous and principled support of the Afghan people. Such attempts have not worked before and will not work now.

Negotiations to bring this war to an end have been taking place in Geneva for over 5 years. We support them. The U.N. negotiator has announced that a timetable for the withdrawal of Soviet troops is the sole remaining obstacle to a settlement. On this matter, we endorse Pakistan's statements that such a timetable must be based solely on logistical criteria and be expressed in terms of months, a very few months, not years.

By presenting unrealistic timetables apparently designed to crush the resistance and achieve a military solution before the Red Army withdraws, the onus for continued fighting falls on the Soviets and their Afghan puppets. The U.N.-sponsored talks are currently suspended. Meanwhile, the Pakistanis have held firm on the key requisites, including Afghan self-determination. As a result there are some faint indications that the Soviets may have begun to understand the need for a realistic political solution.

In these circumstances, it is important to maintain steadily increasing pressure on the Soviets. It is essential that we and others continue to support Pakistan in the face of increasing cross-border attacks and sabotage attempts. Most important, it is essential that we and others continue our support of the brave struggle by the Afghan resistance. We must not let up until all Soviet troops depart and the Afghan people are free to determine their own future. Nothing less will suffice. I am proud of the strong support provided over the past 6 years by my Administration, by the Congress, and by the American people. I am confident we shall continue to stand firm and not falter.

The Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 63, has authorized and requested by the President to issue a proclamation designating March 21, 1987, as "Afghanistan Day."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim March 21, 1987, as Afghanistan Day, and I urge the American people to participate in appropriate observances to reflect our support of the Afghan struggle for freedom.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 20th day of March, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and eleventh.

RONALD REAGAN

Editorial note: For the President's remarks of Mar. 20, 1987, on signing Proclamation 5621, see the Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents (vol. 23, p. 281).

Proclamation 5622 of March 20, 1987

National Energy Education Day, 1987

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

As we approach the 1990's, America must be prepared to formulate energy policy with boldness and vision. Virtually every sector of our highly complex, technological, and interdependent society requires a reliable energy source to keep it functioning smoothly and efficiently.

Community leaders and school officials, both public and private, can help ensure that we meet our energy needs by focusing public attention on the crucial role of education about energy issues. A deeper understanding by teachers, students, and all our leaders of tomorrow about the nature of the energy challenges that lie before us is necessary if we are to continue to meet our energy requirements both at home and abroad.

America is already meeting its energy needs in many important ways. We are continuing to fill the Strategic Petroleum Reserve to reach an eventual goal of 750 million barrels. At the same time, we are also seeking to encourage nuclear power plant construction that is reliable, cost-effective, and environmentally sound. We have made much progress in energy—and by combining the technology of today with the promise and vision of American know-how tomorrow, America will continue to be in the forefront of energy production into the 21st century.

The Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 19, has designated Friday, March 20, 1987, as "National Energy Education 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, March 20, 1987, as National Energy