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Return and Final Interment of Unknown American Killed in Vietnam

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

On this Memorial Day, the remains of an unknown American who gave his life in service overseas in Vietnam will be interred in Arlington National Cemetery.

The casket of this unknown American will arrive in the City of Washington on May 25, 1984, to lie in state in the rotunda of the United States Capitol until final interment.

The individual who finds his last resting place at Arlington on this occasion will be nameless to the entire world. But to the generations of Americans who left their homes and families to fight and defend the freedom and independence of our Nation, he will be known well by his embodiment of that most noble of all sentiments—patriotism.

There will be families from across the land who will come to view this place. To them it will mean that their son, husband, or father rests before them. And, in spirit, it will be true. For they, as we, know him well as one who, as Lincoln said at Gettysburg, gave his "last full measure of devotion."

As we work to preserve that for which he struggled, let us equally dedicate ourselves to the peace we yearn for in our hearts.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby direct that the flag of the United States be flown at half-staff upon all public buildings and grounds, at all military posts and naval stations, and on all naval vessels of the Federal government in the District of Columbia and throughout the United States and its Territories and possessions, when customarily flown, on May 25, May 26, May 27, and May 28, 1984. I also direct that the flag be flown at half-staff for the same period at all United States embassies, legations, consular offices, and other facilities abroad, including all military facilities and naval vessels and stations.

As a sign of our national gratitude and concern, I also urge my fellow citizens to display our country's flag at half-staff at their homes and other appropriate places during this period.

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

Ronald Reagan