

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library Digital Library Collections

This is a PDF of a folder from our textual collections.

Collection: Correspondence, White House Office of:
Records, 1981-89

Folder Title: Afghanistan Day

Box: 77 (1985)

To see more digitized collections visit:

<https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/archives/digitized-textual-material>

To see all Ronald Reagan Presidential Library Inventories, visit:

<https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/archives/white-house-inventories>

Contact a reference archivist at: **reagan.library@nara.gov**

Citation Guidelines: <https://reaganlibrary.gov/archives/research-support/citation-guide>

National Archives Catalogue: <https://catalog.archives.gov/>

Last Updated: 05/3/2023



Afghanistan Day, 1985

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

In a time of prosperity, we do not think of hunger and hardship. In a time of peace, we do not think of suffering and war. In a time when our families are together and healthy, we do not think of the pain we would feel if they were pulled apart. Yet, for the people of Afghanistan, it is impossible to escape such thoughts, because terror, hardship, and suffering have become an everyday way of life ever since the Soviet Union brutally invaded and occupied their country over five years ago.

March 21 is the start of a New Year for the Afghan people. It is traditionally a holiday when they bring their families together to celebrate life's new beginnings and to rejoice and give thanks for God's many gifts.

But in Afghanistan today it may be hard to remember the days when their country had peace, when there was enough food to eat, and when their homes were safe, for the overwhelming majority of Afghans are engaged in a fierce struggle to end the Soviet occupation of their country and the rule of the puppet regime headed by Babrak Karmal.

The year 1984 was an especially hard one for the Afghans. The Soviets have become frustrated with their inability to crush the spirit of the Afghan Freedom Fighters and are increasingly turning their military might against the civilian population of the country, forcing hundreds of thousands more innocent people into exile away from their homeland.

Reports of Soviet atrocities and human rights violations are increasingly gaining the attention of the world's public. Respected organizations such as the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, Amnesty International, and Helsinki Watch have recently released studies detailing the terror that the Soviets and the Karmal regime regularly inflict on the people of Afghanistan. Karmal's tenuous, and brutal, hold on power continues only because his rule is supported by more than 100,000 Soviet occupation troops.

All Americans are outraged by this growing Soviet brutality against the proud and freedom-loving people of Afghanistan. Moreover, the entire world community has condemned the outside occupation of Afghanistan. Six times, in fact, the UN General Assembly has passed strong resolutions—supported by the overwhelming majority of the world's nations—which have:

- called for the immediate withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan;
- reaffirmed the right of the Afghan people to determine their own form of government and choose their economic, political, and social systems;
- reiterated that the preservation of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence, and nonaligned character of Afghanistan is essential for a peaceful solution of the problem; and
- called for the creation of conditions that would enable the Afghan refugees to return voluntarily to their homes in safety and honor.

All Americans are united on the goal of freedom for Afghanistan. I ask the American people, at a time when we are blessed with prosperity and security, to remember the Afghan struggle against tyranny and the rule of government-by-terror. We stand in admiration of the indomitable courage of the Afghan people who are an inspiration to all freedom-loving nations around the globe.

Afghanistan Day will serve to recall the fundamental principles involved when people struggle for the freedom to determine their own future and the right to govern themselves without foreign interference. Let us, therefore, resolve to pay tribute to the brave Afghan people by observing March 21, 1985, as Afghanistan Day. Let us pledge our continuing admiration for their cause and their perseverance and continue to do everything we can to provide humanitarian support to the brave Afghan people, including the millions of Afghan refugees who have been forced to flee their own country.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim March 21, 1985, as Afghanistan Day.

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

Ronald Reagan