

# President declares day of mourning

**Associated Press**

WASHINGTON — President Reagan proclaimed this Memorial Day a national day of mourning for the 37 sailors killed aboard the USS Stark.

He asked U.S. citizens yesterday to pray for the victims and their families.

"Without Americans like them, there would be no land of the free and no home of the brave; because of Americans like them, the lamp of liberty burns on undimmed, unvanquished, and unquenchable," Reagan said of the sailors killed aboard the guided-missile frigate.

"No words of ours can pay them the full tribute that is their due: their service, sacrifice, and love of country crown their memory on this day of grief," Reagan said in his proclamation. "This year, our Memorial Day remembrance is tinged with fresh sorrow as we honor and mourn the brave men taken from us a short week ago."

In his weekly radio address, the president also dwelt on the violent tragedy that befell the crew of the U.S. ship as it patrolled the Persian Gulf. On Friday, Reagan and his wife, Nancy, spent an hour comforting their grieving families and friends at Mayport Naval Station.

"Keep in mind the brave sailors of the USS Stark. Do me a favor, won't you?" Reagan asked. "Whisper a prayer for them, and for their families."

In the Democratic response, Rep. John Spratt, D-S.C., also paid respects to the men of the USS Stark and to the 2 million men and women in the armed services who "face [risks] every day serving their country, trying to keep peace in this troubled world."