
Presidential Documents

Title 3—

Proclamation 6950 of October 31, 1996

The President

Veterans Day, 1996

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

This Veterans Day, Americans enjoy the fruits of peace, freedom, and prosperity in a world where too many must still struggle to live their lives free from conflict, violence, and repression.

As leaders in the fight for liberty, we have sought to advance the cause of freedom and democracy to people all over the world. The credit for our own freedom, as well as our continued security, belongs overwhelmingly to the men and women who have served in our Nation's Armed Forces—our veterans. Had they not been there yesterday, were they not with us today, our world would be far different.

Today we salute their service, honor their sacrifice, thank them for supporting this Nation in every hour of need. And we acknowledge that freedom's cost continues long after the guns fall silent. Many of our veterans bear the disabilities and scars of military service. The families of others—who never returned from their service—live always with a profound sense of loss. It is our duty to remember what our veterans have done and to uphold our commitments to them and their families.

As we mark the past achievements of our veterans, let us remember that they are a vital part of our present and future. Of the 40 million who have served in America's military since the Revolutionary War, 26.5 million are with us today—not distant historical footnotes, but as close as a father or mother, brother or sister, grandfather or grandmother, friend or neighbor.

Their tradition of service extends beyond the battlefield and the barracks. Most veterans in civilian life continue devoting their energies to the service of their country and communities. They are civic-minded role models who challenge and inspire our young people. They are volunteers who work for neighbors in need. They represent what is best in the American spirit.

That is why we must help them make the transition from military to civilian careers and empower them with the opportunities to use their training, discipline, and motivation in good and rewarding jobs. We owe them as well a guarantee that we will continue to defend the American ideals for which they have served and sacrificed. As the strongest force for peace and freedom in the world, we recognize our responsibility to maintain a military capability second to none.

In respect and recognition of the contributions our service men and women have made in defense of America and to advance the cause of peace, the Congress has provided (5 U.S.C. 6103(a)) that November 11 of each year shall be set aside as a legal public holiday to recognize America's veterans.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Monday, November 11, 1996, as Veterans Day. I urge all Americans to recognize the valor and sacrifice of our veterans through appropriate public ceremonies and private prayers. I call upon Federal, State, and local officials to display the flag of the United States and to encourage and participate in patriotic activities in their communities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this thirty-first day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-first.

William Clinton

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