
Presidential Documents

Title 3—**Proclamation 7035 of October 9, 1997****The President****Leif Erikson Day, 1997****By the President of the United States of America****A Proclamation**

Americans have always been a people marked by a spirit of discovery. Generations of American explorers and pioneers have pushed against the boundaries of the known world, eager to see what lies beyond the next horizon. We come by that spirit naturally, for millions of us are descended from men and women of courage, vision, and independence who left their native lands to seek new possibilities in a new world.

One of the earliest of these was Leif Erikson. Almost a thousand years ago, braving the cold and unforgiving North Atlantic, he set out on a voyage that would ultimately bring him to this continent and a lasting place in history. But Leif Erikson is more than a symbol of the pioneer spirit. He is also a powerful reminder of the long and proud history of the sons and daughters of Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland who endured the hardships of the American frontier to build a new life for themselves and their families. These immigrants from the Nordic countries, and their descendants, have contributed immeasurably to America's strength, character, prosperity, and independent spirit.

Today, the people of Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland are our partners in building a new Europe. Committed to democracy and self-determination, they have always reached out to those struggling for freedom and equality. We are proud to join them in fostering the integration of the Baltic countries of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into the Western family of nations. We also look forward to joining our Nordic friends in celebrating in the year 2000 the millennial anniversary of Leif Erikson's momentous voyage to our shores. It is fitting that we should pay special tribute to Leif Erikson—son of Iceland, grandson of Norway—as we begin our own uncharted journey of discovery into the new millennium that stretches before us.

In honor of Leif Erikson and of our Nordic-American heritage, the Congress, by joint resolution approved on September 2, 1964 (Public Law 88-566), has authorized and requested the President to proclaim October 9 of each year as "Leif Erikson Day."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 9, 1997, as Leif Erikson Day. I encourage the people of the United States to observe this occasion with appropriate ceremonies and activities commemorating our rich Nordic-American heritage.

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

William Clinton

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