

## Presidential Documents

Proclamation 6940 of October 11, 1996

### Columbus Day, 1996

By the President of the United States of America

#### A Proclamation

Throughout our history, America has been inspired by the courage and daring of Christopher Columbus. Like him, we are a people who dare to dream, to chart a bold course, and to surmount formidable obstacles to reach new horizons.

Columbus' arrival in North America not only confirmed his beliefs about our planet, but also initiated an epic struggle between the Old and New Worlds. Yet out of that triumphant voyage and the meeting of many peoples developed a Nation and a way of life vastly unlike those Columbus left behind.

The expedition that Columbus—an Italian supported by the Spanish Crown—began more than 500 years ago, continues today as we experience and celebrate the vibrant influences of varied civilizations, not only from Europe, but also from around the world. America is stronger because of this diversity, and the democracy we cherish flourishes in the great mosaic we have created since 1492. Americans of Italian and Spanish heritage can be particularly proud, not only of Columbus' achievements, but also of their own contributions to our country.

As we honor and remember Christopher Columbus, let us use his example as a beacon to help guide us into the 21st century. His life, his voyages, and—above all—his vision can inspire us as we prepare for the challenges that lie ahead. Let us remember that all of us, regardless of our origins, are important participants in that journey, and that our uncertainty about what lies over the horizon should not shake our faith that, together, we will succeed.

In recognition of Columbus' epic achievement, the Congress, by joint resolution of April 30, 1934 (48 Stat. 657), and an Act of June 28, 1968 (82 Stat. 250), has requested the President to proclaim the second Monday in October of each year as "Columbus Day."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 14, 1996, as Columbus Day. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities. I also direct that the flag of the United States be displayed on all public buildings on the appointed day in honor of Christopher Columbus.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh 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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