

Presidential Documents

Title 3—**Proclamation 7027 of September 25, 1997****The President****Austrian-American Day, 1997****By the President of the United States of America****A Proclamation**

For more than 200 years, the life of our Nation has been enriched and renewed by the many people who have come here from around the world, seeking a new life for themselves and their families. Austrian Americans have made their own unique and lasting contributions to America's strength and character, and they continue to play a vital role in the peace and prosperity we enjoy today.

As with so many other immigrants, the earliest Austrians came to America in search of religious freedom. Arriving in 1734, they settled in the colony of Georgia, growing and prospering with the passing of the years. One of these early Austrian settlers, Johann Adam Treutlen, was to become the first elected governor of the new State of Georgia.

In the two centuries that followed, millions of other Austrians made the same journey to our shores. From the political refugees of the 1848 revolutions in Austria to Jews fleeing the anti-Semitism of Hitler's Third Reich, Austrians brought with them to America a love of freedom, a strong work ethic, and a deep reverence for education. In every field of endeavor, Austrian Americans have made notable contributions to our culture and society. We have all been enriched by the lives and achievements of such individuals as Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter; Joel Elias Spingarn, who helped to found the NAACP; psychiatrist and educator Alexandra Adler; lyricist Frederick Loewe, who helped to transform American musical theater; and architects John Smithmeyer and Richard Neutra.

Americans of Austrian descent have also helped to nurture the strong ties of friendship between the United States and Austria, a friendship that has survived the upheaval of two World Wars and the subsequent division of Europe between the forces of East and West. On September 26, 1945, a conference was convened in Vienna among the nine Austrian Federal States that helped to unify the nation and paved the way for recognition by the United States and the Allied Forces of the first postwar Provisional Austrian Government. Setting the date for the first free national elections, this important meeting laid the foundation for the strong, prosperous, and independent Austria we know today.

In recognition of the significance of this date to the relationship between our Nation and the Federal Republic of Austria, and in gratitude for the many gifts that Austrian Americans bring to the life of our country, it is appropriate that we pause to celebrate Austrian-American Day.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Friday, September 26, 1997, as Austrian-American Day. I encourage all Americans to recognize and celebrate the important contributions that millions of Americans of Austrian descent have made—and continue to make—to our Nation's strength and prosperity.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-fifth day of September, 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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