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## Presidential Documents

Title 3—

Proclamation 7034 of October 6, 1997

The President

German-American Day, 1997

By the President of the United States of America

## A Proclamation

America has always drawn its strength from the millions of people who have come here in search of freedom and the opportunity to live out their dreams. Men and women of different nationalities, different races, and different religions have made their own rich and unique contributions to our national life.

From their arrival at Jamestown in 1607 until the present day, Germans have been among the largest ethnic groups to make their home in our country. Like so many others, the earliest German settlements in America were founded by men and women in search of religious liberty. William Penn invited a group of German Mennonites to Pennsylvania, which was to remain a center of German settlement during the Colonial period. Other German communities were founded in New Jersey and New York, as well as in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley, the Carolinas, and Georgia. In the 19th century, German pioneers began to settle in the Midwest and West, and today a quarter of our Nation's population can trace its ancestry to German origins.

Germans and German Americans have profoundly influenced every facet of American life. Great soldiers, such as General Baron von Steuben in our Revolutionary War and General Norman Schwarzkopf in the Gulf War, have fought to preserve our freedom and defend America's interests. Scientists such as Albert Einstein and Wernher von Braun have immeasurably broadened our horizons, as have artists like Albert Bierstadt, Josef Albers, Ernestine Schumann-Heink, Lillian Blauvelt, and Paul Hindemith. And generations of German Americans, with their energy, creativity, and strong work ethic, have enriched the economic and commercial life of the United States. All Americans have benefited greatly from the labor, leadership, talents, and vision of Germans and German Americans, and it is fitting that we set aside this special day to acknowledge their many contributions to our liberty, culture, and democracy.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Monday, October 6, 1997, as German-American Day. I encourage all Americans to recognize and celebrate the many gifts that millions of people of German ancestry have brought to our national life.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this sixth 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.

