

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this second day of December, in the year of our Lord two thousand nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-fourth.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8463 of December 4, 2009

National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, 2009

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

President Franklin D. Roosevelt declared December 7, 1941, a “date which will live in infamy.” With over 3,500 Americans killed or wounded, the surprise attack by the Imperial Japanese on Pearl Harbor was an attempt to break the American will and destroy our Pacific Fleet. They succeeded in doing neither. On National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, we pay tribute to the brave men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country, and we honor all those who selflessly served our Nation at home and abroad during World War II.

On a tranquil Sunday morning, as war raged around the globe, the attack on Pearl Harbor effectively ended American isolation—thrusting our Nation into action. Japanese airplanes had launched an unprovoked assault on our military with immense firepower, and our service members valiantly answered the call. They defended their positions, fought back against the attackers, and cared for the wounded. In that darkest hour, men and women who had considered themselves ordinary found within themselves the ability to do something extraordinary. And in the months and years that followed, Americans all across the country would respond to Pearl Harbor with firm resolve, many joining our Armed Forces to defend our shores and our freedom.

This courage is not uncommon in the story of America—a story of heroes whose sacrifice and valor speak to their love of comrades and country; and whose goodness guides our quest for lasting peace. Today, and every day, we draw strength from the moment when the best among us defended an island and a Nation from the onslaught of tyranny, and forever altered the course of our history.

The Congress, by Public Law 103–308, as amended, has designated December 7 of each year as “National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day.”

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Monday, December 7, 2009, as National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day. I encourage all Americans to observe this solemn day of remembrance with appropriate ceremonies and activities. I urge all Federal agencies and interested organizations, groups, and individuals to fly the flag of the United States at half-staff this December 7 in honor of those American patriots who died as a result of their service at Pearl Harbor.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fourth day of December, in the year of our Lord two thousand nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-fourth.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8464 of December 9, 2009

Human Rights Day, Bill of Rights Day, And Human Rights Week, 2009

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

More than 60 years ago, the United Nations General Assembly approved the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, declaring the “inherent dignity” and “equal and inalienable rights” of all human beings as the “foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.” This self-evident truth guides us today. Although every country and culture is unique, certain rights are universal: the freedom of people—including women and ethnic and religious minorities—to live as they choose, speak their minds, organize peacefully and have a say in how they are governed, with confidence in the rule of law. History shows that countries that protect these rights are ultimately more stable, secure, and successful.

In the United States, these fundamental rights are the core of our Declaration of Independence, our Constitution, and our Bill of Rights. They are the values that define us as a people, the ideals that challenge us to perfect our union, and the liberties that generations of Americans have fought to preserve at home and abroad. Indeed, fidelity to our fundamental values is one of America’s greatest strengths and the reason we stand in solidarity with those who seek these rights, wherever they live.

Human Rights Day, Bill of Rights Day, and Human Rights Week must be our call to action. As Americans, we must keep striving to live up to our founding ideals. As a Nation, the United States will always side with the innocent whose rights are denied, the oppressed who yearn for equality, and all those around the world who strive for freedom. As members of what President Franklin Roosevelt called “the human community,” we will never waver in our pursuit of the rights, dignity, and security of every human being.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim December 10, 2009, as Human Rights Day; December 15, 2009, as Bill of Rights Day; and the week beginning December 10, 2009, as Human Rights Week. I call upon the people of the United States to mark these observances with appropriate ceremonies and activities.