

Proclamation 5719 of October 2, 1987**German-American Day, 1987**

By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation

More Americans trace their heritage back to German ancestry than to any other nationality. More than seven million Germans have come to our shores through the years, and today some 60 million Americans—one in four—are of German descent. Few people have blended so completely into the multicultural tapestry of American society and yet have made such singular economic, political, social, scientific, and cultural contributions to the growth and success of these United States as have Americans of German extraction.

The United States has embraced a vast array of German traditions, institutions, and influences. Many of these have become so accepted as parts of our way of life that their ethnic origin has been obscured. For instance, Christmas trees and Broadway musicals are familiar features of American society. Our kindergartens, graduate schools, the social security system, and labor unions are all based on models derived from Germany.

German teachers, musicians, and enthusiastic amateurs have left an indelible imprint on classical music, hymns, choral singing, and marching bands in our country. In architecture and design, German contributions include the modern suspension bridge, Bauhaus, and Jugendstil. German-American scientists have helped make the United States the world's pioneer in research and technology. The American work ethic, a major factor in the rapid rise of the United States to preeminence in agriculture and industry, owes much to German-Americans' commitment to excellence.

For more than 3 centuries, Germans have helped build, invigorate, and strengthen this country. But the United States has given as well as received. Just a generation ago, America conceived of and swiftly implemented the Marshall Plan, which helped the new German democracy rise from the rubble of war to become a beacon of democracy in Central Europe. The Berlin Airlift demonstrated the American commitment to the defense of freedom when, still recovering from war, Berlin was threatened by strangulation from the Soviets.

Today, the Federal Republic of Germany is a bulwark of democracy in the heart of a divided Europe. Germans and Americans are rightfully proud of our common values as well as our shared heritage. For more than 3 decades the German-American partnership has been a linchpin in the Western Alliance. Thanks to it, a whole generation of Americans and Europeans has grown up free to enjoy the fruits of liberty.

Our histories are thus intertwined. We now contribute to each other's trade, enjoy each other's cultures, and learn from each other's experiences. The German-American Friendship Garden, which will be dedicated in the District of Columbia in the near future, is symbolic of the close and amicable relations between West Germany and the United States.

The Congress, by Public Law 100-104, has designated October 6, 1987, the 304th anniversary of the arrival of the first German immigrants in Philadel-

phia, as "German-American Day" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of that day.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Tuesday, October 6, 1987, as German-American Day. I urge all Americans to learn more about the contributions of German immigrants to the life and culture of the United States and to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 2nd day of Oct., in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twelfth.

RONALD REAGAN

Editorial note: For the President's remarks of Oct. 2, 1987, on signing Proclamation 5719, see the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* (vol. 23, p. 1118).

Proclamation 5720 of October 5, 1987

Polish American Heritage Month, 1987

By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation

During October the people of the United States recognize and rejoice in the many accomplishments of generations of Polish Americans. From the founding of our Republic to the present day, Poles have enriched, strengthened, and defended our Nation. Millions of Polish Americans have attained great success in the arts, sciences, scholarship, and every other field of endeavor, but perhaps their most special gifts to America have been the faith and love of liberty Poles have cherished through the centuries.

That Polish love of liberty manifested itself in the hard, early days of the American Revolution when Polish freedom fighters such as Kosciuszko and Pulaski stood with us for independence. They knew the profound truth that freedom's cause is universal, that in struggling for our freedom they were working for Poland's freedom and for all mankind's. They knew that once America had fired "the shot heard 'round the world" no tyrant could ever again rest easy.

Today, as always, Americans stand in solidarity with the continuing Polish struggle for political, religious, and economic liberty. By advocating these precious freedoms so eloquently and forthrightly, His Holiness John Paul II and Lech Walesa have come to symbolize hope, justice, and human dignity to all Americans and to countless millions around the world. Their idealism, self-sacrifice, and devotion inspire us as we express our thanks to Polish Americans and our pride in our country's Polish heritage.

The Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 135, has designated the month of October 1987 as "Polish American Heritage Month" and authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this event.