

PROCLAMATION 4255

Thanksgiving Day, 1973

November 16, 1973*By the President of the United States of America*

A Proclamation

In the first Thanksgiving, man affirmed his determination to live in God's grace and to act in God's will on the shores of a new land of promise. In this Thanksgiving season we reaffirm that determination.

Time has not dimmed, nor circumstance diminished the need for God's hand in all that America may justly endeavor. In times of trial and of triumph that single truth reasserts itself, and a people who have never bowed before men go gladly to their knees in submission to divine power, and in thanks for divine sustenance.

On this Thanksgiving Day we mark the 10th anniversary of the tragic death of President John F. Kennedy. As we give thanks for the bounty and goodness of our land, therefore, let us also pause to reflect on President Kennedy's contributions to the life of this Nation we love so dearly.

Those who celebrated the first Thanksgiving had endured hardship and loss, but they kept alive their hope and their faith. Throughout our history, each generation has endured hardship and loss, but our faith and trust in God's providence has remained undiminished. At this first Thanksgiving in twelve years in which the United States will have been at peace, we see that God's grace also remains undiminished. For this we give thanks.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RICHARD NIXON, President of the United States of America, in accordance with the wish of the Congress as expressed in Section 6103 of Title 5 of the United States Code, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 22, 1973, as a day of national thanksgiving, and concurrently, a day of prayer for the memory of John F. Kennedy. Let all Americans unite on this day, giving thanks for the manifold blessings vouchsafed our people, and inviting all of those less fortunate than ourselves to share in those blessings in God's name, for His sake, and for our own.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred

seventy-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred ninety-eighth.



PROCLAMATION 4256

Bill of Rights Day

Human Rights Day and Week

By the President of the United States of America

December 7, 1973

A Proclamation

Among the principles undergirding our Declaration of Independence in 1776 was the fundamental conviction that all men are endowed with certain inalienable rights and that the purpose of instituting governments is to secure these rights. The first Congress acted quickly to secure the basic rights of the American people by proposing ten amendments to the Constitution of the United States. These amendments, our Bill of Rights,¹ came into effect one hundred eighty-two years ago, on December 15, 1791, and have served ever since as guiding ideals of our democracy. Each generation of Americans has contributed in its own way to realizing the promise of the Bill of Rights, ensuring its responsiveness to the increasingly complex conditions of American society.

The continuing vitality of that promise depends upon our own steadfast dedication to the principles upon which this Republic was founded. Now, in this decade of our Bicentennial, it is especially appropriate for us to commemorate the anniversary of the adoption of the Bill of Rights and to recall with pride the efforts of our predecessors to make its ideals a true guarantee of the rights of all Americans.

It is fitting that we take note at the same time of the progress made by the world community in its recognition of the rights of all members of the human family. This week marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 10, 1948, to proclaim standards of freedom and equality common to all nations and all peoples. Though widely separated by time and authorship, the Bill of Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights share a common commitment to the ideals of equality, dignity, and individual worth.

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