

Families are the most universal and enduring element in human existence. A family is a reservoir of shared experiences, shared joys and sorrows and, most of all, shared love that spans generations and distances.

As we come together at this Thanksgiving season, we gather with our families to express our gratitude. Our family circles expand to welcome and include others in the warmth of the holiday season. It is a time for all of us to cherish those we love and to celebrate family life.

We must continue this attention to families all year round, however. Through the coming White House Conference on Families, our new Office on Families, and through new approaches that would encourage more adoptive and foster parents, governments and citizens together can learn to become better family advocates of the American family. We must nurture the family as it has nurtured us.

Ante, p. 856.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JIMMY CARTER, President of the United States of America, in accordance with a joint resolution of Congress, do hereby proclaim the week of November 18, 1979, as National Family Week and call upon all the American people to observe this week with appropriate activities in their homes and communities.

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

JIMMY CARTER

Proclamation 4704 of November 26, 1979

National Child Abuse Prevention Month, 1979

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

America's children are our most precious resource, and in this final month of the International Year of the Child I urge all Americans to consider what they can do to prevent child abuse and neglect.

The needs of children are best met in families where provisions can be made for the special needs and limitations of all family members. Even loving parents sometimes fail to provide adequate supervision, or find themselves in situations where needs are not met or emotions are difficult to control.

I urge communities and helping organizations to work with families to alleviate conditions that result in the abuse and neglect of children. I especially urge all those who feel unable to cope with problems to seek out help.

Our Nation's children are our Nation's future. We all share in the responsibility for making sure they grow up in a healthful environment. I appeal to public agencies, private organizations and the business community to support needed social, educational and health services in their communities to strengthen families during the critical child-rearing years.

Working together, with sensitivity and concern, we can reduce the incidence and lifelong damage of child abuse.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JIMMY CARTER, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the month of December, 1979, as National Child Abuse Prevention Month.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-sixth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred seventy-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fourth.

JIMMY CARTER

Proclamation 4705 of December 6, 1979

Bill of Rights Day

Human Rights Day and Week, 1979

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

On December 15, 1791, the Bill of Rights became part of the Constitution of the United States. On December 10, 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In marking these anniversaries, we renew our dedication both to our own liberties and to the promotion of human rights everywhere on earth.

USC prec. title 1.

In our open society, a freely elected government, an independent judiciary, a free and vigorous press, and the vigilance of our citizens combine to protect our rights and liberties—civil, political, economic and social.

We can be proud of what we have achieved so far. Yet we cannot rest satisfied until the Bill of Rights is a living reality for every person in the United States. The Equal Rights Amendment would help do that by explicitly guaranteeing the basic rights of American women. I urge every state that has not yet done so to ratify this wise and necessary measure in the coming year.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights sets global standards that reflect the same vision that inspired our own Bill of Rights. Almost every country has endorsed the Declaration. Yet in too much of the world its promise is mocked.

Arbitrary arrest and imprisonment, summary executions and torture, disappearances and acts of genocide still shatter the lives of millions. Fundamental human liberties are continually threatened by the silencing of political dissenters, by discrimination based on race, religion, ethnic origin and sex, by violations of the freedoms of assembly, association, expression and movement, and by the suppression of trade unions. And as the kidnapping and abuse of American Embassy employees in Iran have reminded us, the internationally protected rights of diplomatic envoys are a basic condition of civilized relations among nations.

Those who cause others anguish—whether they are the secret police of dictators, the faceless bureaucrats of totalitarian states or the chanting mobs of revolutionary zealots—must know that we will not defend them, but their victims.