

dren. Now, together, they are ushering in an era of historic change and continuous improvement that promise a healthier future for all Americans.

In recognition of the contributions of the National School Lunch Program to the nutritional well-being of children, the Congress, by joint resolution of October 9, 1962 (Public Law No. 87-780), has designated the week beginning the second Sunday in October of each year as "National School Lunch Week" and has requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of that week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the week beginning October 13, 1996, as National School Lunch Week. I call upon all Americans to recognize those individuals whose efforts contribute to the success of the National School Lunch Program and to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-first.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 6939 of October 11, 1996

National Children's Day, 1996

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Our Nation benefits when every American child is truly valued and cherished. We have no greater responsibility or hope for our future than our children, and the promise of a better tomorrow depends upon the love, support, education, and encouragement that we give to each of them. It is up to all of us—parents and families, schools, churches, and community organizations—to join in the critical endeavor of putting the needs of our children first. Only when we reaffirm our commitment to our children's well-being can we truly say that we are prepared for the challenges that await us in the next century.

America is a country of many blessings—a rich land, a thriving democracy, a diverse and determined people. Our culture is built on faith in freedom, and opportunity, and on the spirit of community. In a Nation of such infinite promise, too many of our children face great obstacles in reaching their full potential, and it is imperative that we not turn our backs on them.

Because safety, health, a clean environment, quality education, and economic security are the keys to a brighter future, they are necessary investments in the healthy growth and development of our children. Through measures such as expanding Head Start and child care, preserving Medicaid, enhancing child protection, protecting the environment, and increasing educational opportunity for all students, my Administration has demonstrated its commitment to ensuring that every child has the tools to become a productive citizen.

Proc. 6940

Title 3—The President

As we work together in a spirit of community, let us seek to instill confidence, hope, pride, and self-esteem in our young people. Because today's children are tomorrow's leaders, educators, and parents, all of us—adults and children—forever will benefit from this commitment.

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 October 13, 1996, as National Children's Day. I urge all Americans to express their love and appreciation, not only on this day but also on all days, for their children and all of the children of this Nation. I invite Federal officials, State and local governments, and particularly the American family, to join in observing this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities to honor our Nation's children.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-first.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 6940 of October 11, 1996

Columbus Day, 1996

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

Throughout our history, America has been inspired by the courage and daring of Christopher Columbus. Like him, we are a people who dare to dream, to chart a bold course, and to surmount formidable obstacles to reach new horizons.

Columbus' arrival in North America not only confirmed his beliefs about our planet, but also initiated an epic struggle between the Old and New Worlds. Yet out of that triumphant voyage and the meeting of many peoples developed a Nation and a way of life vastly unlike those Columbus left behind.

The expedition that Columbus—an Italian supported by the Spanish Crown—began more than 500 years ago, continues today as we experience and celebrate the vibrant influences of varied civilizations, not only from Europe, but also from around the world. America is stronger because of this diversity, and the democracy we cherish flourishes in the great mosaic we have created since 1492. Americans of Italian and Spanish heritage can be particularly proud, not only of Columbus' achievements, but also of their own contributions to our country.

As we honor and remember Christopher Columbus, let us use his example as a beacon to help guide us into the 21st century. His life, his voyages, and—above all—his vision can inspire us as we prepare for the challenges that lie ahead. Let us remember that all of us, regardless of our origins, are important participants in that journey, and that our uncertainty about what