

**Proc. 8668**

**Title 3—The President**

freedom and justice, let our prayers be with men and women everywhere who seek peace, human dignity, and the same rights we treasure here in America.

The Congress, by Public Law 100–307, as amended, has called on the President to issue each year a proclamation designating the first Thursday in May as a “National Day of Prayer.”

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 5, 2011, as a National Day of Prayer. I invite all citizens of our Nation, as their own faith or conscience directs them, to join me in giving thanks for the many blessings we enjoy, and I ask all people of faith to join me in asking God for guidance, mercy, and protection for our Nation.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-ninth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand eleven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-fifth.

BARACK OBAMA

**Proclamation 8668 of May 3, 2011**

**50th Anniversary of the Freedom Rides**

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

Fifty years ago, America was struggling to implement the ideals of justice and equality set forth in our founding. The Freedom Rides, organized in the spring of 1961, were an interracial, nonviolent effort to protest the practice of segregation. Setting out from Washington, D.C., on May 4, 1961, the Freedom Riders sought to actualize the decision in *Boynton v. Virginia*, which held that interstate passengers had a right to be served without discrimination, and to challenge the enforcement of local segregation laws and practices.

The Freedom Rides, organized by the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and other devoted advocates, built upon the boycotts and sit-ins that were defying Jim Crow segregation across the South. The Freedom Riders themselves were black and white, often students and young people, and committed to the cause of nonviolent resistance. Along the way, buses were attacked and men and women were intimidated, arrested, and brutally beaten. The publicity generated by the courageous Freedom Riders as they faced continued violence and complicit local police drew the attention of the Kennedy Administration and Americans across our country.

Through their defiant journeys, the Freedom Riders sent a resounding message to the rest of our Nation that desegregation was a moral imperative. The Freedom Riders also motivated and mobilized the next generation of civil rights leaders. The unflinching bravery and unyielding commitment of the Freedom Riders inspired many of those involved to become lifelong activists, organizers, and leaders in the civil rights movement.

Today, we remember the Freedom Riders for the sacrifices they made in pursuit of the rights we now enjoy. They showed that people working together across backgrounds and boundaries could hold America accountable to our highest ideals and bend the arc of history towards justice. They showed that young people have the power to generate a movement for equality and steer the course of our Nation. Because of their efforts, and the work of those who marched and stood against injustice, we live in a country where all Americans have the right to dream and choose their own destiny.

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 May 2011 as the 50th Anniversary of the Freedom Rides. I call upon all Americans to participate in ceremonies and activities that honor the Freedom Riders and all those who struggled for equal rights during the civil rights movement.

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

BARACK OBAMA

#### **Proclamation 8669 of May 5, 2011**

### **Military Spouse Appreciation Day, 2011**

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

Military spouses serve as steady and supportive partners to the heroes in uniform who protect and defend our great Nation every day. Across America and around the world, military spouses serve our country in their own special way, helping families and friends through the stress of a deployment, caring for our wounded warriors, and supporting each other when a loved one has made the ultimate sacrifice.

Our service members and their families seldom ask for support or recognition. They carry out their duties to family and country with the quiet courage and strength that has always exemplified the American spirit. On Military Spouse Appreciation Day, we have an opportunity to not only honor the husbands and wives of our service members, but also thank them by actively expressing our gratitude in both word and deed.

When a member of our Armed Forces is deployed, an entire family is called to serve. The readiness of our troops depends on the readiness of our military families, as millions of parents, children, and loved ones sacrifice as well. This means supporting our military spouses is also a national security imperative. Earlier this year, my Administration released the report on military families, *Strengthening our Military Families: Meeting America's Commitment*, which marshaled resources from across our Government to identify new opportunities to support these patriots.

First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden are working tirelessly to enlist all sectors of American life to address the unique challenges of military