

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this third day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirteenth.

RONALD REAGAN

**Proclamation 5878 of October 3, 1988**

**Columbus Day, 1988**

*By the President of the United States of America*

*A Proclamation*

We Americans proudly set aside time as a Nation each October to pay tribute to Christopher Columbus, whose voyage to the Americas in 1492 inaugurated communication between worlds old and new. Today, nearly 500 years after his epochal discoveries, Columbus remains for us a giant of exploration and of the human spirit—a man whose faith, vision, courage, and perseverance have won him an imperishable place in the history of America and the world.

The qualities Columbus exhibited so well have always made him a kindred soul to pioneering and individualistic Americans, who to this day confidently set sail in their own way toward far horizons in every area of achievement. Not for us the discouraging word, but rather the desire to do and to dare for a great good. Generations of Americans recall the lines of Joaquin Miller's poem, "Columbus": "Now speak, brave Adm'r'l, speak and say"—He said: 'Sail on! sail on! and on!' " and its final lines, "He gained a world; he gave that world its grandest lesson: 'On! sail on!' " That was the spirit of Columbus, and it is the American spirit.

Today, our homage to Christopher Columbus includes recognition of the accomplishments of the many Italians who have followed him to America and of the achievements of their descendants. Columbus remains an inspiration for them and for all Americans, and a source of comity between the peoples of Italy and the United States.

The same is true for Americans of Spanish descent. Support by the Spanish monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella made the discoveries of Columbus possible and led to Spain's later cultural and economic contributions to the New World and the development of the heritage we share with our Spanish-speaking neighbors throughout the Western Hemisphere.

As we approach the 500th anniversary of the first voyage of Columbus to the New World in 1492, observances in his honor are growing in number and significance. The Christopher Columbus Quincentenary Jubilee Commission, a group of Americans assisted by representatives from Spain, Italy, and the Bahamas, has made recommendations for our Nation's celebration of the Quincentenary. The Commission is planning educational and commemorative programs that will take place across our land. We can all look forward to an appropriate, enjoyable, and truly memorable jubilee.

In tribute to Christopher Columbus, the Congress of the United States, by joint resolution approved April 30, 1934 (48 Stat. 657), as modified by the Act of June 28, 1968 (82 Stat. 250), has requested the President to proclaim the second Monday in October of each year as "Columbus Day."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Monday, October 10, 1988, as Columbus Day. I invite the people of this Nation to observe that day with appropriate ceremonies in honor of this great explorer. I also direct that the flag of the United States be displayed on all public buildings on the appointed day in honor of Christopher Columbus.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 3rd day of Oct., in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirteenth.

RONALD REAGAN

*Editorial note.* For the President's remarks of Oct. 3, 1988, on signing Proclamation 5878, see the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* (vol. 24, p. 1255).

#### **Proclamation 5879 of October 7, 1988**

### **National Paralysis Awareness Week, 1988**

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

We should all be aware that spinal cord injuries paralyze some 12,000 Americans each year, adding to the total of nearly half a million citizens whose lives have undergone this sudden and tragic change. Motor vehicle accidents are the chief cause of these injuries, and young men are the most at risk; but spinal cord injuries happen in many ways, and to anyone at any age. War wounds have taken a large toll. Recreational and sports accidents injure many, and so do mishaps in the home. Paralyzed people meet challenges such as physical limitations, rehabilitation, and drains on financial resources with determination, ingenuity, and a positive outlook. We do well to hold a week in recognition of the needs, capabilities, accomplishments, and courage of paralyzed Americans and of efforts in their behalf.

Understanding of paralysis continues to grow, thanks to biomedical research led by scientists supported by the National Institute of Neurological and Communicative Disorders and Stroke. One major advance, with promising applicability to humans, is the realization that injured nerve cells in animals' spinal cords can regrow and may reassume function. Other developments are continuing.

Regeneration of nerve cells appears to hold the best biological hope for paralyzed limbs. Scientifically developed neural prostheses that use electrodes to connect nerve cells to muscle fibers are permitting some restoration of function. Investigators are seeking ways to limit post-injury tissue destruction by controlling substances within the body that ironically damage spinal cord tissue as they relieve trauma-induced