

of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and eighteenth.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

**Proclamation 6668 of April 12, 1994**

**National Day of Prayer, 1994**

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

In a country built by people from hundreds of nations and with as many beliefs, we rely upon our religious liberty in order to preserve the individuality and great diversity that give our Nation its unique richness and strength of character. America's founders saw the urgent need to protect religious freedom and opened debate on the important subject when the Continental Congress gathered in Philadelphia to chart a course for our nascent country. After hearing Massachusetts delegate Samuel Adams' plea, the Congress voted to begin its session with a prayer. When the framers of the Bill of Rights set down our fundamental rights, the free exercise of religion rightfully took its place at the head of our enumerated liberties.

As our Nation has grown and flourished, our Government has welcomed divine guidance in its work, while respecting the rich and varied faiths of all of its citizens. Many of our greatest leaders have asked God's favor in public and private prayer. From patriots and presidents to advocates for justice, our history reflects the strong presence of prayer in American life. Presidents, above all, need the power of prayer, their own and that of all Americans.

We need not shrink as Americans from asking for divine assistance in our continuing efforts to relieve human suffering at home and abroad, to reduce hatred, violence, and abuse, and to restore families across our land. By following our own beliefs while respecting the convictions of others, we can strengthen our people and rebuild our Nation. As Micah reminds us, we must strive "to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly" before God.

The Congress, by joint resolution approved April 17, 1952, having recognized the role of faith and prayer in the lives of the American people throughout our history, has set aside a day each year as a "National Day of Prayer." Since that time, each President has proclaimed an annual National Day of Prayer, resuming the tradition begun by our leaders in the Nation's earliest days. Pursuant to Public Law 100-307 of May 5, 1988, the first Thursday of each May has been set aside as a National Day of Prayer.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 5, 1994, as a National Day of Prayer. I encourage the citizens of this great Nation to gather, each in his or her own manner, to recognize our blessings, acknowledge our wrongs, to remember the needy, to seek guidance for our challenging future, and to give thanks for the abundance we have enjoyed throughout our history.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twelfth day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and eighteenth.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

**Proclamation 6669 of April 13, 1994**

**251st Anniversary of the Birth of Thomas Jefferson**

*By the President of the United States of America*

*A Proclamation*

"I am certainly not an advocate for frequent and untried changes in laws and constitutions," Thomas Jefferson once wrote, "But . . . laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind. As that becomes more developed, more enlightened, as new discoveries are made, new truths disclosed, and manners and opinions change . . . institutions must advance also, and keep pace with the times."

These words have challenged and inspired the countless millions who have come to America's capital and have seen them inscribed on the marble wall of the Jefferson Memorial. Jefferson's statue presides nobly over America's capital city, a steadfast and enduring reminder of the democratic government that he helped to found. Yet unlike his unchanging visage, our democracy's institutions have proved to be remarkably agile in governing, maturing as society has progressed, evolving as human knowledge and technology have advanced—far beyond Jefferson's imagining. Of all the truths Jefferson knew to be self-evident, of all the freedoms he held dear, this understanding of the need for political and social innovation is perhaps his most lasting gift. He helped to endow us with the freedom to embrace change.

As we complete the year celebrating the 250th anniversary of his birth, it is entirely fitting that we again pause to reflect upon both the contradictions of Jefferson's life and the meaning of his legacy. Far from the sculpted perfection of his statue, Jefferson acknowledged, even anguished about, his failings as a leader. In expressing his fervent hope that we would one day purge the evil of slavery from our land, he wrote, "I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, that his justice cannot sleep forever." Despite his flaws, Jefferson imbued us with his powerful faith that justice would ultimately transcend our seeming inability to do what we know is right. And I believe he would rejoice to know how far America has come toward winning equal justice under law.

In the United States, we must constantly relearn his teaching that change is both an inevitable and essential part of safeguarding our precious freedoms. We recognize, as he did in his day, that our democracy must continue to develop, that we must shape our politics and policies to meet the rapidly shifting needs of our people and to embrace the better angels of our nature. On this day, we remember that our Nation is an ongoing experiment, a new and fragile spirit, requiring our eter-