

Proclamation 6771—Irish-American Heritage Month, 1995

February 23, 1995

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

America's bounty—the abundance of the fields, the beauty of the landscape, the richness of our opportunities—has always attracted people who are in search of a better life for themselves and their children. Our democracy owes its success in great part to the countless immigrants who have made their way to our shores and to the tremendous diversity this Nation has been blessed with since its beginnings.

In March, when communities all across the country celebrate St. Patrick's Day, our Nation honors the rich heritage of the millions of Americans who trace their lineage to Ireland. Coming to this land even before our Nation was founded, sons and daughters of Erin undertook the perilous journey to make their home in a place of hope and promise. They made inestimable contributions to their new country, both during the struggle for independence and in the founding of the Republic. Nine of the people who signed our Declaration of Independence were of Irish origin, and nineteen Presidents of the United States proudly claim Irish heritage—including our first President, George Washington.

The largest wave of Irish immigrants came in the late 1840s, when the Great Famine ravaging Ireland caused 2 million people to emigrate, mostly to American soil. These immigrants transformed our largest cities and helped to build them into dynamic centers of commerce and industry, and their contributions to our smaller cities and towns are evident today in the cultural, economic, and spiritual makeup of the communities. Throughout the country, they faced callous discrimination: "No Irish Need Apply" signs were ugly reminders of the prejudice that disfigured our society. But with indomitable spirit and unshakable determination, they persevered. They took jobs as laborers, built railroads, canals, and schools, and committed themselves to creating a brighter future for their families and their new country.

Today, millions of Americans of Irish ancestry continue to enrich all aspects of life in the United States. Irish Americans are proud to recall their heritage and their struggle for well-deserved recognition in all walks of American life. Throughout their history, they have held tightly to their religious faith, their love of family, and their belief in the importance of education. The values they brought with them from the Emerald Isle have flourished in America—and in turn these values have helped America to flourish.

In tribute to all Irish Americans, the Congress, by Public Law 103-379, has designated March 1995 as "Irish-American Heritage Month" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this month.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim March 1995 as Irish-American Heritage Month.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-third day of February, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and nineteenth.

William J. Clinton

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NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on February 27.

Remarks at a Gala Dinner in Ottawa
February 23, 1995

Prime Minister and Mrs. Chrétien, Ambassador and Mrs. Chrétien, Ambassador and Mrs. Blanchard, ladies and gentlemen: let me begin by thanking the Prime Minister for his generous words and by thanking Prime Minister and Mrs. Chrétien and all of our Canadian hosts for making Hillary and me feel so at home here today in our first day of our wonderful visit.

We all have so much in common, so many roots in common. I couldn't help thinking, when we shared so many jokes in the Parliament today and so many good laughs, of all the things I might have said. One of the

things that is most fascinating to Americans about Canada is the way you blend your cultures. I understand, now that we've come across the river from Ottawa to Hull, everything is first in French and then in English. And I'm trying to accommodate to all this. And I thought about a true story that I would share with you.

One of the members of our official party today came all the way from Georgia, Mr. Gordon Giffen, who's sitting out here, but he was born in Canada. And you should know that Georgia, in the heart of the American South, has a lieutenant governor named Pierre Howard. He was very self-conscious about running with a name like Pierre in the South. And in desperation one day, he said, "Well, you have to understand, Pierre is French for Bubba." [Laughter] And you all know that I come from Arkansas. I can say to you with absolute confidence that if any person were here from my State tonight, he or she would say, "*Je me sens chez moi au Canada.*"

The Prime Minister and I have a lot in common. We have small-town roots and modest backgrounds, his in Shawinigan and Quebec. Did I say that right? Shawinigan? Shawinigan. Better? And mine in Hope—I have a hometown that's easier to pronounce. We began early in political life. He entered the Parliament, I think, when he was 29. I tried to enter the Congress when I was 28. I failed, and I have been grateful for it ever since. [Laughter]

Our political persuasions and our programs are so similar that one magazine called me a closet Canadian. I think that is a compliment, and I take it as such. We talk a lot about our humble roots. At home when our friends wish to make fun of me, they say that if I talk long enough I will convince people that I was born in a log cabin I built myself. And that's what I thought the first time I met Prime Minister Chrétien. [Laughter]

We've had a few agonizing political defeats, and we've managed a comeback. As I think about it, I can only think of one thing that separates me from the Prime Minister: about 15 points in the public opinion polls. [Laughter] I resent it, but I'm doing what I can to overcome it.

Mr. Prime Minister, one of the glories of Ottawa is the wonderful old canal that winds through this community. It's protected by sweeping and weeping willows in the summertime, and it's, as I saw today, animated by skaters in the winter. As I understand it, the canal was constructed about 150 years ago by a British engineer to help defend Canada from the United States. Thankfully, I'm told that if you ask most Canadians today why the canal was built they can't say. The fact that the canal's origin is unremembered speaks volumes about the unique relationship between our two countries, neighbors, allies, friends. Each of us is blessed to share with the other the bounty of this magnificent continent.

Over the years the partnership we have forged has produced many tangible benefits for our people, as you pointed out. We have a joint defense program that protects our skies and makes us more secure. We have a shared commitment to our environment that improves the quality of the air we breathe and the water we drink. We have economies that are so complementary we enjoy the world's largest trading relationship in ways that create jobs and raise incomes on both sides of our border. We have a common passion for democracy that has united us in trying to protect freedom and peace and democracy and enterprise far from our own lands.

The interests and values we share have allowed us to recognize and respect our differences as well. Canada has shown the world how to build a gentler society with a deeply felt concern for the health and well-being of all its citizens. It has shown the world that strength and compassion are not incompatible. There is much in your country from which Americans can and do draw inspiration.

And so tonight, in celebrating all that unites us, let us also remember that which is unique in our countries. Hillary and I enjoyed very much our all-too-brief tour of this magnificent tribute to your unique culture. Let us resolve to work together to bring out the best in each other as we move forward together as partners and as friends. Long live this great nation.

Mr. Prime Minister, one of your most illustrious predecessors, Lester Pearson, put it well when he said, "I now accept with equanimity the question so constantly addressed to me, 'Are you an American?' and merely return the accurate answer, Yes, I am a Canadian."

And so tonight in celebrating our countries and what unites us, let us work together and let us say: Long live Canada! *Vive le Canada!*

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 8:35 p.m. at the Museum of Civilization. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and his wife, Aline; U.S. Ambassador to Canada James Blanchard and his wife, Janet; and Canadian Ambassador to the United States Raymond Chrétien and his wife, Kay. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Executive Order 12951—Release of Imagery Acquired by Space-Based National Intelligence Reconnaissance Systems

February 22, 1995

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America and in order to release certain scientifically or environmentally useful imagery acquired by space-based national intelligence reconnaissance systems, consistent with the national security, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Public Release of Historical Intelligence Imagery. Imagery acquired by the space-based national intelligence reconnaissance systems known as the Corona, Argon, and Lanyard missions shall, within 18 months of the date of this order, be declassified and transferred to the National Archives and Records Administration with a copy sent to the United States Geological Survey of the Department of the Interior consistent with procedures approved by the Director of Central Intelligence and the Archivist of the United States. Upon transfer, such imagery shall be deemed declassified and shall be made available to the public.

Sec. 2. Review for Future Public Release of Intelligence Imagery. (a) All information that meets the criteria in section 2(b) of this order shall be kept secret in the interests of

national defense and foreign policy until deemed otherwise by the Director of Central Intelligence. In consultation with the Secretaries of State and Defense, the Director of Central Intelligence shall establish a comprehensive program for the periodic review of imagery from systems other than the Corona, Argon, and Lanyard missions, with the objective of making available to the public as much imagery as possible consistent with the interests of national defense and foreign policy. For imagery from obsolete broad-area film-return systems other than Corona, Argon, and Lanyard missions, this review shall be completed within 5 years of the date of this order. Review of imagery from any other system that the Director of Central Intelligence deems to be obsolete shall be accomplished according to a timetable established by the Director of Central Intelligence. The Director of Central Intelligence shall report annually to the President on the implementation of this order.

(b) The criteria referred to in section 2(a) of this order consist of the following: imagery acquired by a space-based national intelligence reconnaissance system other than the Corona, Argon, and Lanyard missions.

Sec. 3. General Provisions. (a) This order prescribes a comprehensive and exclusive system for the public release of imagery acquired by space-based national intelligence reconnaissance systems. This order is the exclusive Executive order governing the public release of imagery for purposes of section 552(b)(1) of the Freedom of Information Act.

(b) Nothing contained in this order shall create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable by any party against the United States, its agencies or instrumentalities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

Sec. 4. Definition. As used herein, "imagery" means the product acquired by space-based national intelligence reconnaissance systems that provides a likeness or representation of any natural or man-made feature or related objective or activities and satellite