

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:04 a.m., November 1, 1996]

NOTE: This Executive order was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 1, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on November 4. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Proclamation 6950—Veterans Day, 1996

October 31, 1996

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

This Veterans Day, Americans enjoy the fruits of peace, freedom, and prosperity in a world where too many must still struggle to live their lives free from conflict, violence, and repression.

As leaders in the fight for liberty, we have sought to advance the cause of freedom and democracy to people all over the world. The credit for our own freedom, as well as our continued security, belongs overwhelmingly to the men and women who have served in our Nation's Armed Forces—our veterans. Had they not been there yesterday, were they not with us today, our world would be far different.

Today we salute their service, honor their sacrifice, thank them for supporting this Nation in every hour of need. And we acknowledge that freedom's cost continues long after the guns fall silent. Many of our veterans bear the disabilities and scars of military service. The families of others—who never returned from their service—live always with a profound sense of loss. It is our duty to remember what our veterans have done and to uphold our commitments to them and their families.

As we mark the past achievements of our veterans, let us remember that they are a vital part of our present and future. Of the 40 million who have served in America's military since the Revolutionary War, 26.5 million are with us today—not distant historical footnotes, but as close as a father or mother, brother or sister, grandfather or grandmother, friend or neighbor.

Their tradition of service extends beyond the battlefield and the barracks. Most veterans in civilian life continue devoting their energies to the service of their country and communities. They are civic-minded role models who challenge and inspire our young people. They are volunteers who work for neighbors in need. They represent what is best in the American spirit.

That is why we must help them make the transition from military to civilian careers and empower them with the opportunities to use their training, discipline, and motivation in good and rewarding jobs. We owe them as well a guarantee that we will continue to defend the American ideals for which they have served and sacrificed. As the strongest force for peace and freedom in the world, we recognize our responsibility to maintain a military capability second to none.

In respect and recognition of the contributions our service men and women have made in defense of America and to advance the cause of peace, the Congress has provided (5 U.S.C. 6103(a)) that November 11 of each year shall be set aside as a legal public holiday to recognize America's veterans.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Monday, November 11, 1996, as Veterans Day. I urge all Americans to recognize the valor and sacrifice of our veterans through appropriate public ceremonies and private prayers. I call upon Federal, State, and local officials to display the flag of the United States and to encourage and participate in patriotic activities in their communities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this thirty-first 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

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**Remarks in Santa Barbara,
California**

November 1, 1996

The President. Thank you. Good morning. Thank you very much. Thank you. Can it really be November? [Laughter] Thank you so much, Mayor Miller, County Superintendent Naomi Schwartz, President MacDougall, Senator O'Connell. And an alumna of this school, your State Superintendent of Schools, Delaine Eastin, thank you for being here.

I am delighted to be back here. As all of you know, I think, our family came here on a little vacation after the '92 election. I hope this will bring us good luck in the next 4 days. I'm glad to be here.

I want to thank Walter Capps for running again for Congress after 1994. As some of you may know, I have more than a passing interest in this race because his daughter, Laura, works for us at the White House. And if there were a popularity contest among White House employees, she would probably win it. The apple doesn't fall far from the tree. I know from her that he should be elected, quite apart from everything he has done. Let me say, Walter Capps lost a very close race in 1994, about a thousand votes. It would have been easy to walk away from a disappointment like that, but he came back. He had a serious accident. It would have been easy to walk away and say, "Well, someone else should take up this battle," but he came back. That's the kind of commitment and courage and fortitude this country needs in the United States Congress.

And last year, when his opponent joined the Gingrich-Dole revolution——

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. ——and voted for an almost unbelievably destructive budget for America, one that would have cut environmental enforcement drastically, made it more difficult for us to take further actions to protect our environment, the first cut in education in modern history, including student loans and Head Start——

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. ——repealed the guarantee of health care we had provided for 30 years to poor children; to middle class fami-

lies with members with disabilities to allow them to care for their family members, let them live at home, and maintain their middle class lifestyles; to our seniors in nursing homes, even to repeal the very standards of care we impose to protect people in nursing homes.

When that happened and I vetoed it, they shut the Government down. And they said, "You have to accept everything in our budget, or we will just keep shutting the Government down." And the people who led the way were those first-year Members of Congress, like Mr. Capps' opponent. They said, "We want everything." I said, "Well, there's a provision in this budget which would allow corporation managers to raid their workers' pension funds. Don't we have any memory?" Look what happened in the eighties to the pension funds. In 1994, finally I got through the last Congress a bill to protect the pensions of 40 million working Americans. I said, "Are we going to turn right back around and do this all over again?" "Yes, shut the Government down."

I said, "Well, there's a provision in this bill, while it gives me a tax cut at my income level—which I don't need—until we balance the budget, this bill would actually raise taxes on 8 million of the hardest working Americans, people working for very modest wages—trying to raise their taxes? You're going to take away their present tax credits and raise their taxes? Can we take that out?" "No, shut the Government down."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Now there's an attempt to develop a little short-term amnesia among the electorate as we get closer to the elections: "Please forget that; forget that." [Laughter]

You have a big choice to make in this race. Walter Capps is a good man, a brave man. He shares your values; he shares your dreams. I hope you'll send him back to Congress.

Ladies and gentlemen, in just 4 days we will elect the last President of the 20th century and we will choose the first President of the 21st century. As Walter Capps said, I do believe we're at one of those magic moments between hope and history, when we have the opportunity to both have unprece-