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Proclamation 7047—National American Indian Heritage Month, 1997

November 1, 1997

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

American Indians and Alaska Natives have played a vital role in the life of our country, and their many contributions have enhanced the freedom, prosperity, and greatness of America today. In celebrating National American Indian Heritage Month, we reaffirm our country's commitment to remember those contributions and to honor the unique heritage of our continent's first inhabitants.

This special observance also reflects our continuing commitment to American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments as an integral part of the social, political, and economic fabric of the United States. The framers of our Constitution incorporated Indian nations into the political and legal framework of this country, forever joining the destiny of the tribal nations with that of the American people. By this action, our founders charged themselves and future generations with the moral obligation to guard the rights and fundamental liberties of our country's tribal peoples as zealously as we protect the rights of all Americans.

As we enter the next millennium, we have an exciting opportunity to open a new era of understanding, cooperation, and respect among all of America's people. We must work together to tear down the walls of separation and mistrust and build a strong foundation for the future. To accomplish this, we must strengthen tribal governments, improve the quality of education for American Indian and Alaska Native youth, build stable, diversified economies in tribal communities, create high-wage jobs, and ensure that all our citizens have the skills, education, and opportunities they need to reach their full potential.

The government-to-government relationship between the tribes and the United States embodies the fundamental American belief that people of widely varied and diverse cultural backgrounds can join together to build a great country. Such greatness can be sustained, however, only so long as we honor the ideals and principles upon which America is founded and abide by our commitments to all our people. In recognition of America's moral and legal obligations to American Indians and Alaska Natives, and in light of the special trust relationship between tribal governments and the Government of the United States, we celebrate National American Indian Heritage Month.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim November 1997 as National American Indian Heritage Month. I urge all Americans, as well as their elected representatives at the Federal, State, local, and tribal levels, to observe this month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., November 4, 1997]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 3, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on November 5.

Remarks at a Rally for Gubernatorial Candidate Donald S. Beyer, Jr., in Alexandria, Virginia

November 3, 1997

The President. Thank you very much. This looks like a crowd of winners to me. Ladies and gentlemen, I am so honored to be here with Senator Robb and Mrs. Robb and Congressman Moran, Congressman Scott, your mayor, your Democratic State chair, with Bill Dolan and Susan Payne. And let me say, I thought Yvonne gave a great speech, didn't you? [*Applause*] And I am very, very proud to be here—very proud—

to be here with Don Beyer and his fine family.

Now, let me say to you, I think the last two speeches were about as good as it gets. [*Laughter*] And I may have nothing to add, but let me speak to you as someone who will never be a candidate for public office again——

Audience members. Awwww——

The President. ——unless you let me run for the school board down here someday. [*Laughter*] But I was a Governor for 12 years, and I've been your President for 5 years, and I've seen most of the major political battles of the last 20 years unfold. Many times they were Democrats against Republicans in traditional ways, liberals against conservatives. That is not what this is. This is nothing more or less than what Don Beyer said: This is a vote for an easy hit today or doing the right thing for tomorrow.

And I was a Governor for 12 years—nobody likes to fool with licensing their cars, with taxing their cars; it is a pain. This is a brilliant ploy because there is hardly anything in life more irritating. [*Laughter*] So let us give the opposition credit; they have found an irritant that we would all like removed. The question is, at what price? At what consequence? And what happens after it's done?

This really is a question about whether Virginians will be selfish in the moment or selfless for their children and their future, not because there is anything inherently wrong with getting rid of a pain in the neck, wherever it is—[*laughter*]—but because as we grow older and we assume responsibilities, we all do things in life because we can't think of a better way to do something even more important. And I say to you, that's what's at issue here.

This reminds me back in 1993, when Senator Robb bravely stood by me, and we adopted that tough economic program. And the easy thing to do was to oppose it. And our Republican friends said, ''The President's economic program is going to raise your income taxes.'' It didn't, but they convinced a lot of people it did—unless you were in the same income group that Don Beyer and I are in. [*Laughter*] Ninety-nine percent of the people didn't have their income taxes raised. And they said it would bring a recession. Well, 5 years later, we have reduced the deficit by more than 90 percent before the balanced budget law kicks in, because we did the right thing. And we have 13 million new jobs and the lowest unemployment rate in a generation and the lowest inflation rate in over 30 years. But in 1994, some good Members of Congress lost their seats because they did the right thing for the long-term and the people hadn't felt it yet.

I was in New Jersey yesterday; you heard Don Beyer talking about that. Well, the Governor said, ''I'll cut income taxes by 30 percent,'' and it sounded so good. And she did. But what she didn't say was, they'd have to run the State into huge debt to do it and, oh, by the way, local governments had the power to raise the property tax by every dollar that they cut the income tax, which was more regressive, more burdensome, and wound up being a bigger pain in the neck. And so, a race which we shouldn't even be having up there because the economy is good, with an incumbent Governor, turns out to be a real horse race, because people figured out 4 years later, ''I went for the quick hit, and maybe I got sold a bill of goods.''

Now, you don't have 4 years, you just have 24 hours. But it's amazing how common sense can strike people in the flash of an eye. This is a great State. This is the State of our Founding Fathers. You have a tradition to uphold. You have a meaning that is special not only to you but to the rest of America. How could you knowingly damage the education of our children and the future of your State for something that will be immensely satisfying for about 30 seconds, maybe an hour, maybe a week at most, and then you'll be paying for it for the next 4 years?

That is the issue. You have to get people to think not about the immediate frustration being relieved or the comfort of the moment but about what they really believe in.

The other thing I want to say is, I know that a lot of people vote who don't have children in school. But if we hadn't learned anything in the last 2 years in America, surely we have learned they are all our children. I think it is amazing that all these former Republican Governors have come out against this plan. I also think it is amazing that it's

the Democrat in this race, not the Republican, who is standing up for higher standards and accountability and moving our State—your schools forward, not just with more investment in education but with higher quality of education. I am proud of the fact that it is the Democratic Party in Virginia and in Washington, DC, standing for high standards, accountability, and excellence, as well as investment in education.

So I say to you, this is really a race where you have to choose the moment over the lifetime—or today or tomorrow; or a mature, full, whole vision of the future, or what gratifies you personally but very briefly. This is going to be like one of those meals you order and you're hungry 30 minutes later—[*laughter*]—or it's going to be like something you do and afterward you are so proud of yourself.

Think how this State will feel on Wednesday morning when Don Beyer is Governor. Think how you'll feel. Think how you felt every time in your life when you did something you knew wasn't quite so, wasn't quite right, selfishly gratifying, and you felt lousy the next day. And think how you felt every time in your life you were tempted to do something that was selfish and you didn't do it, and the next day you felt wonderful. You felt more alive. You felt more human. You said, ''This is what I'm here on this Earth for.'' Every time you gave up something so you could do something else for your children; every time you gave up something so you could give a little more to your favorite charity; every time you didn't sit home and watch a ball game and instead went out and helped the Scouts or some other community group—think how good you felt. That's how this State is going to feel if you vote for Don Beyer, because you'll know you did it for the future, for your children, for your noblest instincts. That's why you will do it.

Now, I've seen all these polls. Let me tell you something I know about them. I've been on both sides of them—[*laughter*]—always more fun to be ahead than behind. The remarkable thing about these surveys is they all agree on one thing: There is still an enormous undecided vote.

Now, that means two things. Number one, it means if everybody who is willing to make the mature, long-term, noble choice here on this issue shows up to vote, that counts about 1½ times as much as it would in a race where there's not a big undecided vote. So before you go pat yourselves on the back too much for being here, just remember, if you and everybody else you know who is for Don Beyer don't show up, then your good intentions don't amount to a hill of beans. So you have to be there.

The second thing is, with all these undecided votes, that's telling you something. That's telling you that the electorate of Virginia is just like all of us are whenever we're confronted with this kind of choice: Yes, I want the pie after the meal. [*Laughter*] No, I want to feel good tomorrow. [*Laughter*] I think I'll spend this money. No, I had better put it in my child's college savings account.

That's what's going on; that's what this undecided vote's about. There's a scale in the mind and psyche of the voters, and the scale can still be shifted. So you need to think about it. You've got 24 hours and then all day when the polls are open tomorrow. And if the polls are right and there are all these undecided votes, you could practically just start walking up and down the street here today talking to people and find a bunch of them. And so I want you to do it.

I'm telling you, once in a great while an election like this comes along where a murmur starts in the people. And it spreads like wildfire, and people really get caught up in it—and it doesn't happen till the last minute. That is what is happening now. You have a chance to win this election if you go—if everybody you know who is for Don and L.F. and Bill goes, and if you go out there and say, ''I am not going to treat this election like it's over. There are too many undecided people. There must be 10 or 20 people I can call. I can go out into the mall and walk up to strangers and ask them to think about this.''

Remember, this is about how the State is going to feel the next day. It's about where the State is going to be 4 years from now. And it's about where your children are going to be in the 21st century. Do the right thing, and you'll love it.

God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:43 p.m. at Market Square. In his remarks, he referred to Lynda Robb, wife of Senator Charles S. Robb; Mayor Kerry J. Donley of Alexandria; Sue Wrenn, State Democratic chair; William D. Dolan III, State attorney general candidate; Susan Payne, wife of L.F. Payne, Jr., candidate for Lieutenant Governor; and Yvonne Jukes, president, Fairfax Education Association.

Remarks on the 10th Anniversary of National Public Radio's "Performance Today"

November 3, 1997

Thank you very much, Martin. Ladies and gentlemen, as you can hear I'm still a little hoarse, but I'm delighted that you're here, and I'm delighted to be here. And I thank you for mentioning the biggest thrill I've had lately, the opportunity to conduct the National Symphony. Actually, I have been used to dealing with the Congress for so long now, I was surprised that they followed my lead. [*Laughter*] But we got through it just fine.

Welcome. The first concert held in this magnificent house was on New Year's Day, 1801, when President John Adams invited the Marine Band to play. In nearly 200 years, there have been a lot of other concerts here. More than a century ago, President Chester Arthur inaugurated the first concert right here in the East Room. And 20 years later, Theodore Roosevelt made showcasing the world's finest musicians in this room a standing tradition. Pablo Casals was among the first artists Theodore Roosevelt invited to perform, in 1904.

It was more than 50 years later that the concert to which Martin referred at the outset of the performance tonight occurred, when Casals came back for another East Room performance when President and Mrs. Kennedy lived here. This was made even more momentous, of course, by the fact that his performance was enjoyed not simply by Cabinet members and diplomats gathered in the room but by Americans of all walks of life who could tune in on their radio stations and hear the concert.

Hillary and I are very proud that we're able to continue this fine tradition tonight to have the finest of music, from classical to jazz to opera to gospel, with all Americans. We're honored to celebrate with you the 10th anniversary of "Performance Today." It has been an extraordinary effort by National Public Radio. In just 10 years "Performance Today" has become an important part of the lives of so many of our fellow Americans—1.5 million Americans in more than 200 communities listen to "Performance Today" every single week, and I know its audience will surely grow. If every American could hear what we heard tonight, there would be a fire sale on radios throughout America and everyone would want 10 or 20 more.

We want to do what we can to continue to support the young musicians we've heard tonight—and I consider them all young. [*Laughter*] Even 50 is young to me. [*Laughter*]

As part of our White House Millennium Initiative, we'll host a series of cultural showcases, shining a spotlight on the next generation's most promising musicians, celebrating their great American creativity. Who knows what great musicians and composers will enliven our concert halls and airwaves in the 21st century—the next Marsalis or Graves or Roberts or Galway or Perahia or Ngwenyama? And thank you, young lady, by the way, for sticking up for the National Endowment for the Arts, as well. We appreciate you very much.

All of these great performers who have been here tonight have made us feel a little more alive, a little more human, and a little more noble. We thank them. And perhaps the best way we can honor their gift to us tonight is by resolving to celebrate the gifts of the future, both in the White House and on "Performance Today," for many, many years to come.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:45 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Martin Goldsmith, host of NPR's "Performance Today" program; and musician Nokuthula Ngwenyama.