

on many more. It is our good fortune to be an immigrant nation, to be the keepers of traditions and gifts that have come to us from great nations like Italy. More than 15 million Americans claim Italian heritage. And all Americans have reason to be grateful, because we would be poorer without it.

I now have the singular honor of signing the official document proclaiming October 8th, 2001, as Columbus Day in the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:09 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to James Bonzano, battalion chief, Arlington County Fire Department; Joseph J. Esposito, chief, New York City Police Department; Daniel A. Nigro, chief, Fire Department-City of New York; Kathleen Ganci, widow of New York City Fire Department Chief Peter Ganci, Jr., and their children, Christopher, Peter III, and Danielle; Ambassador Fernando Salleo, Italian Ambassador to the United States, and his wife, Anna Maria; Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy; Gov. George E. Pataki of New York; and Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani of New York City.

### **Proclamation 7482—Columbus Day, 2001**

*October 8, 2001*

*By the President of the United States  
of America*

#### **A Proclamation**

More than 500 years ago, Christopher Columbus set sail from Spain on his historic voyage to what would be called the “New World.” His celebrated journey inaugurated an age of exploration that changed the course of history and enormously expanded our understanding of the world. Columbus’ willingness to brave the unknown led to his remarkable find, bringing about further explorations that enormously enhanced the intellectual, commercial, and demographic fabric of Europe and the Americas. The stories of Columbus’ voyage became a symbol of the quest for knowledge and understanding of the world, and it laid the historical foundation upon which much of America’s future progress was built.

Reflecting on Christopher Columbus’ legacy, we remember his great courage in

choosing to sail across uncharted waters, we recall the power of his adventurous spirit, and we are inspired by his willingness to assume considerable risks for the sake of knowledge and progress. These virtues have been echoed down through history by some of America’s greatest pioneers, from Meriwether Lewis and William Clark’s daring explorations of our western frontier to the Apollo astronauts planting the American flag on the moon. Our Nation continues to follow the example of Columbus’ bold desire to push the horizon, pursuing new paths of research and using our discoveries to benefit all of mankind.

Columbus’ voyage represented the first linking of the lands and cultures separated by the Atlantic Ocean, and it served as a precursor to the close ties that exist today between America and Europe. His discovery connected continents separated by substantial geographic, religious, and cultural barriers; and America has since formed partnerships with nations across the seas that have sought to overcome those and other barriers through agreements affecting such areas as trade, human rights, and military support.

In commemoration of Columbus’ momentous journey 509 years ago, the Congress, by joint resolution of April 30, 1934 (48 Stat. 657), and an Act of June 28, 1968 (82 Stat. 250), has requested that the President proclaim the second Monday of October of each year as “Columbus Day.”

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 8, 2001, as Columbus Day. I urge the people of the United States to reflect on the contributions of Christopher Columbus with appropriate means of celebration. 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 eighth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-sixth.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:54 a.m., October 10, 2001]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on October 11.

### **Remarks Following Discussions With Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany and an Exchange With Reporters**

*October 9, 2001*

**The President.** It's been my honor to welcome a great friend of America to the Oval Office again. Chancellor Schroeder came to talk about our war against terrorist activities. We had a great discussion.

First, I want to thank the Chancellor for his solidarity with the American people and his strong statement of support for the American people right after the evildoers struck on September the 11th. I also want to thank Chancellor Schroeder and the German people for their outpouring of support for the victims.

And I also want to thank him for being a steadfast friend in a broad coalition that is determined to rout terrorism out where it may exist, to not only bring the Al Qaida organization to justice but to declare a broad campaign against terrorists and terrorism all across the world. There is no more steadfast friend in this coalition than Germany, and I'm proud to have him here.

We also talked about the Middle East and the importance that both of us recognize for that process to get into Mitchell as quickly as possible. The German Government has been very strong about working with both parties in the Middle East to get into Mitchell. I assured him we're doing the same thing. There would be no better stabilizer for our coalition than for the Mitchell process to begin in the Middle East.

But Mr. Chancellor, we're so thrilled to have you here. Thank you for coming.

**Chancellor Schroeder.** Thank you very much, indeed, Mr. President. I obviously, very happily came here, and I'm pleased to be here, because it is important to us to show that very much in these difficult times, friendship must prevail and does prevail. And I'm also here to express the deepest solidarity from the German side, which is not just words being said, but it's a fact.

We very much are in agreement about the fact that this fight against terrorism, which we are all involved in by now, must be a very comprehensive approach, indeed. The action that is being taken right now must be added to through political measures, through diplomatic action, too.

We also find it very important to maintain the strong degree of cohesion that we see at this point in time within the antiterror alliance that has formed around the world. We went on to agree that it was crucially important to dry up the financing for the terrorists. And we also find it very important to highlight that the action that is presently being taken in Afghanistan is not at all directed against the people of Afghanistan; it is not at all directed against Islam; it is far rather directed against Usama bin Laden and the very ruthless regime behind him.

We have also very strongly emphasized how important we find it that we do provide relief for the refugees and cope with the refugee problem that will arise. And I can only yet again emphasize the high degree of respect that I feel vis-a-vis the United States of America and the American President, how he has gone about linking humanitarian aid and assistance up with the strike in this fantastic way he has done.

**The President.** Thank you, sir.

### **Military Action in Afghanistan/German Contribution**

**Q.** Mr. President, how close are we to using U.S. ground troops in Afghanistan? And Mr. Chancellor, what extra commitments did you make of German military assets today to the United States cause?

**The President.** Well, first, I think the American people are beginning to realize that this is a unique type of war. The first shot we took in this war against terrorism was when we started cutting off their money. And I want to thank the German Chancellor and the German Government for cooperating and joining with us in not only sharing information but making it clear to Al Qaida and other terrorist groups, we're going to cut you off financially.

Secondly, as you know, we've started conventional operations. And I believe Secretary Rumsfeld summed it up pretty well today