

American economic development initiatives, and to help Native Americans obtain loans more easily for building homes and starting new businesses.

Today's Native Americans are among the youngest segments of our population—a new, large generation of young people who, if empowered with the education, skills, opportunity, and encouragement they need to thrive, can lead Indian Country into a future as bright and promising as its extraordinary past. As we observe National American Indian Heritage Month, let us resolve to work together to make that future a reality.

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 1998 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 twenty-ninth day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 7145 of October 29, 1998

National Adoption Month, 1998

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Every child deserves a safe and loving family. But each year, thousands of American children grow up without such families, lacking the stability and sense of permanency they need to thrive. More than 100,000 such children— orphaned, abandoned, abused, or unable to remain at home for other serious reasons—will need homes in the next few years. Although foster care provides a good supportive temporary environment for these children, adoption can provide them with the sustained love and care of permanent families and can give adults the chance to open their hearts and homes to a child they will cherish.

My Administration has worked hard both to improve the experience of children awaiting adoption and to increase their chances of adoption. Last November, I signed into law the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, which made sweeping changes in our Nation's child welfare system. This legislation underscores the importance of safety and permanency for children awaiting adoption and focuses on the urgency of finding adoptive families. In addition to achieving passage of this landmark legislation, we have made adoption easier by barring discrimination by race or ethnicity, by providing a tax credit for newly adoptive parents, and by ensuring that adoptive parents are covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act.

We must strengthen such efforts if we are to meet our national goal of doubling the number of adoptions by the year 2002. In addition, while adop-

tion in America has increased in recent years, more than 25,000 young Americans each year reach the age of 18 and leave the child welfare system without permanent homes or families. This statistic tells us that we still have much to do. We must not only secure the placement of young children in families, but also move aggressively to place in permanent families our older children, as well. I have directed the Federal Government to work with State and local governments to continue identifying and removing the barriers that prevent young people from moving from our child welfare system into adoptive families.

Working together—policymakers, government officials, family welfare agencies, religious and community organizations, and families—we can make a difference in the lives of thousands of children. My Administration will continue to support efforts to recruit and strengthen adoptive families and to shorten the time it takes to move children from foster care to permanent homes; to reduce the backlogs in our Nation's juvenile and family court systems; and to promote strong, supportive adoption programs that meet the needs of every child.

During National Adoption Month, let us recommit ourselves to the goal of finding a safe, permanent, and loving home for every child in need. Let us also honor the many caring families across our Nation who have opened their arms and their hearts to a child through adoption. By making such a profound and loving commitment to our Nation's most vulnerable children, they are also making a lasting investment in America's future.

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 1998 as National Adoption Month. I urge all Americans to observe this month with appropriate programs and activities to honor adoptive families and to participate in efforts to find permanent, loving homes for waiting children.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-ninth day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 7146 of November 9, 1998

Veterans Day, 1998

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

This year on Veterans Day, we celebrate the 80th anniversary of the armistice that finally silenced the guns of World War I. Millions of brave Americans marched into Europe and into the brutality of trench warfare to fight that war. Although President Woodrow Wilson recognized that "it is a fearful thing to lead this great peaceful people into war," he also realized that it was important to do so "for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts—for democracy, for the right of those who submit to au-