

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

APRIL 13, 1976

Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

THOMAS JEFFERSON DAY, 1976

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BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A PROCLAMATION

Two hundred years ago the people of our new land struggled to secure for themselves, and for us, freedom from the rule of a distant government. Among the greatest of that inspired group of patriots was Thomas Jefferson.

Author of the Declaration of Independence, first Secretary of State of the new Republic and our third President, his achievements cover the vast range of public service -- as lawyer, member of the Virginia House of Delegates, Governor, Minister to France, Vice President, scholar, scientist, architect and founder of the University of Virginia.

Today, less than one hundred days before the 200th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, we observe the birthday of Thomas Jefferson, a giant in history who yet today excites scholars, inspires political leaders and continues to grace our history as its most articulate champion of individual freedom.

Pursuant to Proclamation No. 2276 of March 21, 1938, our Nation has formally celebrated the 13th of April in honor of the birthday, in 1743 of this great man. In our Bicentennial Year, it is fitting that we celebrate this day in a special way, as the Congress has requested (H.J. Res. 670).

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GERALD R. FORD, President of the United States of America, do hereby request the observance of Tuesday, April 13, 1976, as Thomas Jefferson Day.

I ask all Americans, in their homes, their schools, and their places of work, to reflect on the life and times of Thomas Jefferson. I urge every American to reflect on the meaning and purpose of the Declaration of Independence and the many other works of Thomas Jefferson and to participate in other appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this thirteenth day of April in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and seventy-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundredth.

GERALD R. FORD

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