



## Martin Luther King, Jr., Day, 1989

*By the President of the United States of America*

### **A Proclamation**

During January, America celebrates a national holiday in honor of the birthday of the Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King, Jr. We do so in memory of a man who asked to be recalled by his countrymen not for any earthly honors he had won but as "a drum major for justice." That title he deemed greater than any other because earning it would mean that he had not lived his life in vain.

Today, America does remember Dr. King as a drum major for justice, as a giant whose life was far from being in vain. In a sermon on the eve of his assassination, he surely described his own mission when he asked, "Who is it that is supposed to articulate the longings and aspirations of the people more than the preacher? Somehow the preacher must be an Amos, and say, 'Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.'" Martin Luther King, Jr., did exactly that. He gave eloquent voice and powerful leadership to the long-cherished hopes of millions as he headed a crusade to end bigotry, segregation, and discrimination in our land; to foster equal opportunity; and to make universal America's promise of liberty and justice for all.

Dr. King's work is not done, but neither is his witness stilled. He urged again and again that all of us come to love and befriend one another, to live in brotherhood and reconciliation, to nourish each and every individual's dignity and self-respect. We must reaffirm in every generation the lessons of justice and charity that Dr. King taught with his unflinching determination, his complete confidence in the redeeming power of love, and his utter willingness to suffer, to sacrifice, and to serve. We must, and we can, all be drum majors for justice. That is our duty and our glory as Americans. On Martin Luther King, Jr., Day and every day let us unite in prayer and promise to be true to the American Dream he loved and renewed.

By Public Law 98-144, the third Monday in January of each year has been designated as a public holiday in honor of the "Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, 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 Monday, January 16, 1989, as Martin Luther King, Jr., Day.

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

*Ronald Reagan*