

THE PRESIDENTIAL HATS:

Commander in Chief



**The Commander in Chief wears a camouflaged combat helmet.
Service members wear helmets like this to protect them during combat.**

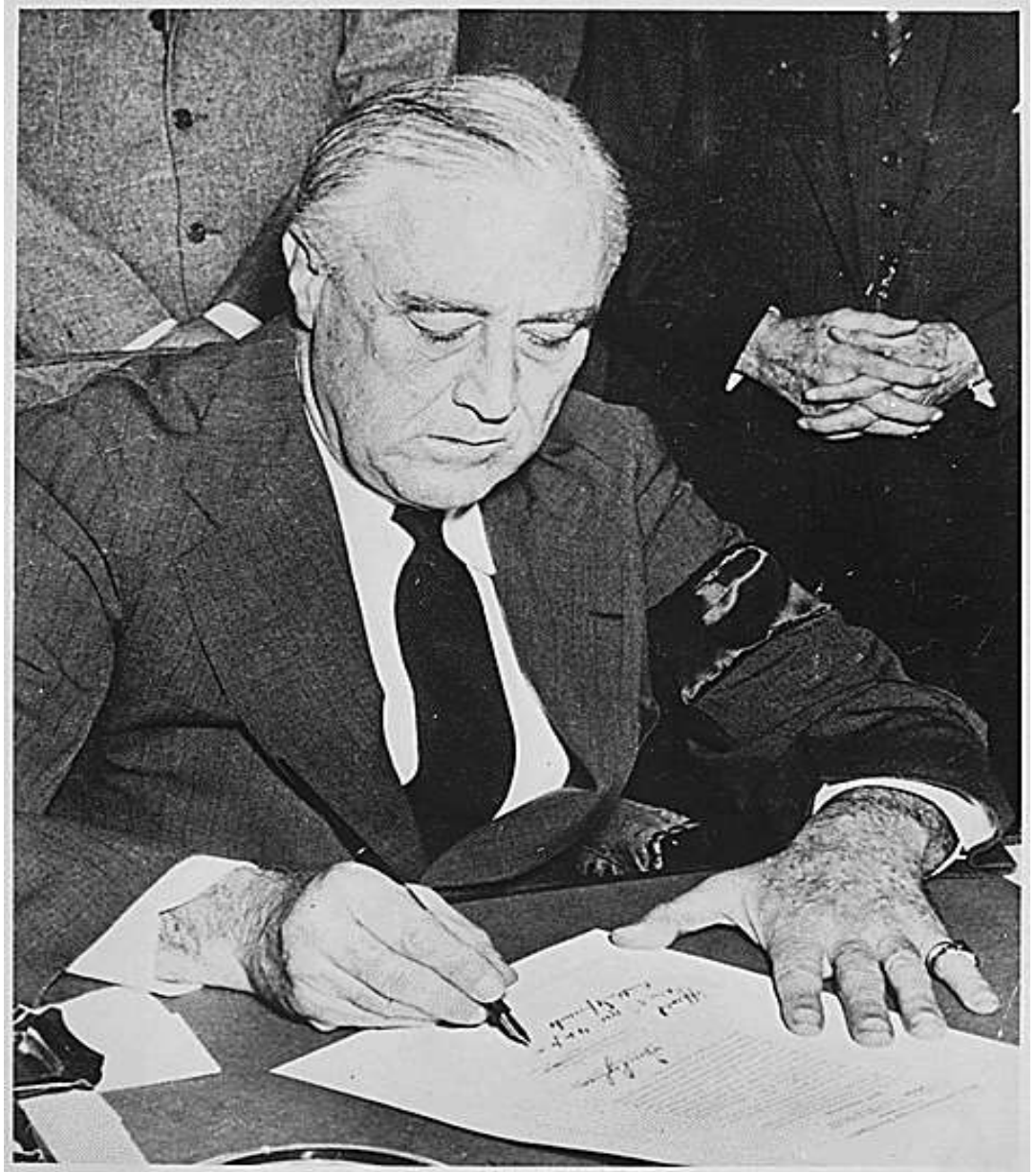
Declaring War

On December 8, 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a Declaration of War Against Japan.

He made the decision to ask Congress to declare war after Japanese planes bombed the American naval base in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on December 7, 1941. Roosevelt called this day a “date which will live in infamy.”

Congress approved his request almost unanimously and drafted the Declaration of War.

To hear the beginning of President Roosevelt’s “Day of Infamy” speech, click the icon below.



Visiting Deployed Troops

When American military members are deployed overseas during a war, presidents often visit them. These visits help to lift the soldiers' spirits.

Top Picture:

President Lyndon B. Johnson and General William Westmoreland travel through Vietnam in a Jeep greeting American soldiers in 1966.



Bottom Picture:

On November 22, 1990, President George H.W. Bush and First Lady Barbara Bush traveled to Saudi Arabia during Operation Desert Shield. While there, they met soldiers and had Thanksgiving dinner with the U.S. Army's 197th Infantry Brigade.



~~TOP SECRET~~

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 11652, Sec. 3(E) and 5(D)

WHITE HOUSE PRESS RELEASE 4/19/51

By MLT/asc., NARS Date 3-7-75

PROPOSED ORDER TO GENERAL MacARTHUR TO BE SIGNED BY
THE PRESIDENT



I deeply regret that it becomes my duty as President and Commander in Chief of the United States military forces to replace you as Supreme Commander, Allied Powers; Commander in Chief, United Nations Command; Commander in Chief, Far East; and Commanding General, U. S. Army, Far East.

You will turn over your commands, effective at once, to Lt. Gen. Matthew B. Ridgway. You are authorized to have issued such orders as are necessary to complete desired travel to such place as you select.

My reasons for your replacement, which will be made public concurrently with the delivery to you of the foregoing order, will be communicated to you by Secretary Pace.

and are contained in the next following message.

Harry S. Truman

Appointing and Dismissing Commanders

As Commander in Chief, the President has the responsibility to choose or replace commanders in the United States military.

In April of 1951, President Harry S. Truman wrote the above orders relieving General Douglas MacArthur of his command and naming his replacement. The orders also include a statement explaining why he was being replaced.



Changes to the Military

In July 1948, President Harry S. Truman signed an order to desegregate the military, making sure all soldiers would be recognized as one group. Before this order, soldiers were recognized and separated by their race.

Picture

African-American and White Soldiers During World War II, March 1, 1945

ESTABLISHING THE PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE ON
EQUALITY OF TREATMENT AND OPPORTUNITY IN
THE ARMED SERVICES

WHEREAS it is essential that there be maintained in the armed services of the United States the highest standards of democracy, with equality of treatment and opportunity for all those who serve in our country's defense:

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the United States, by the Constitution and the statutes of the United States, and as Commander in Chief of the armed services, it is hereby ordered as follows:

1. It is hereby declared to be the policy of the President that there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion or national origin. This policy shall be put into effect as rapidly as possible, having due regard to the time required to effectuate any necessary changes without impairing efficiency or morale.

2. There shall be created in the National Military Establishment an advisory committee to be known as the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services, which shall be composed of seven members to be designated by the President.

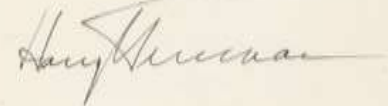
3. The Committee is authorized on behalf of the President to examine into the rules, procedures and practices of the armed services in order to determine in what respect such rules, procedures and practices may be altered or improved with a view to carrying out the policy of this order. The Committee shall confer and advise with the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary

of the Army, the Secretary of the Navy, and the Secretary of the Air Force, and shall make such recommendations to the President and to said Secretaries as in the judgment of the Committee will effectuate the policy hereof.

4. All executive departments and agencies of the Federal Government are authorized and directed to cooperate with the Committee in its work, and to furnish the Committee such information or the services of such persons as the Committee may require in the performance of its duties.

5. When requested by the Committee to do so, persons in the armed services or in any of the executive departments and agencies of the Federal Government shall testify before the Committee and shall make available for the use of the Committee such documents and other information as the Committee may require.

6. The Committee shall continue to exist until such time as the President shall terminate its existence by Executive order.



THE WHITE HOUSE,

July 26, 1948.

THIS ORIGINAL ARCHIVED
FILED AND MADE AVAILABLE
FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION
JUL 27 10 39 AM '48
IN THE OFFICE OF THE
FEDERAL REGISTER

9981

Truman's Executive Order 9981 to Integrate the Military, July 26, 1948

Honoring the Fallen

As Commander in Chief, the President honors those who have served in the military and paid the ultimate price of their life.

Top Picture:

President Ronald Reagan lays a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Arlington National Cemetery, Virginia, November 11, 1985.



Bottom Picture:

President Barack Obama places a wreath at the base of the Yongsan War Memorial, located in the U.S. Army Garrison Yongsan in Seoul, Korea, November 11, 2010.



Honoring the Fallen

At the end of the Battle of Gettysburg, during the American Civil War, more than 51,000 Confederate and Union soldiers were wounded, missing, or dead.

Land was purchased to bury the men who had fallen during the battle. When President Abraham Lincoln spoke at the dedication of the Gettysburg Cemetery on November 19, 1863, he reminded all who were present to, "resolve these dead shall not have died in vain; that the nation, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people by the people for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

This document is a copy of President Lincoln's original "Gettysburg Address."

Executive Mansion,

Washington, _____, 1863

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth, upon this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that "all men are created equal"

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived, and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of it, as a final resting place for those who died here, that the nation might live. This we may, in all propriety do. But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate—we can not consecrate—we can not hallow, this ground—the brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have hallowed it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here; while it can never forget what they did here.

It is rather for us, the living, ^{we here be sworn} to stand here,

Challenge Coins

Challenge coins are awarded to members of the military by a commanding officer. They are presented as awards for outstanding service and to recognize achievement. Members of the military will often “challenge” each other to see who has the coin from the highest ranking official. The person who has that coin wins the challenge.

As Commander in Chief of the Military, the President’s coin will win every challenge. President George W. Bush knew this and gave his coin to military members injured in battle.

Top Pictures:

Front and back of President George W. Bush’s challenge coin.

Bottom Picture:

On July 18, 2006, President George W. Bush awarded Navy SEAL Marcus Luttrell the Navy Cross for his heroic service in Operation Red Wings.

At the ceremony, Luttrell gave President Bush these five coins. Each coin represents a SEAL in his unit who was killed in Operation Red Wings. Luttrell was the only survivor.

Also pictured is Luttrell’s patch from the Operation.



Did you know many of our Presidents were in the military before they became Presidents?

Top Right Picture:

General George Washington and his Generals. Copy of print by A. H. Ritchie circa 1870.

Bottom Left Picture:

Lieutenant John F. Kennedy sitting in the cockpit of World War II Motor Torpedo Boat PT-109.

Bottom Middle Picture:

Photograph of Lieutenant Commander Gerald R. Ford, Jr. in his naval uniform in 1945.

Bottom Right Picture:

General Dwight D. Eisenhower gives the order of the Day on June 6, 1944 (D-Day). He tells the paratroopers in England "full victory-nothing else" before they board their airplanes to participate in the first assault of continental Europe during World War II.



Article II, Section 2

- Article II, Section 2 of the United States Constitution names the powers of the President.
- In Article II, Section 2, the President is named Commander in Chief of the United States Military:
 - “The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Militia of the several States, when called into the actual Service of the United States”
- **Remember:** While the President can ask Congress for a declaration of war, he cannot declare war. That power belongs to Congress.