

This Administration will continue to work in partnership with U.S. business and industry to promote the quality of American goods and services and to eliminate barriers to free and fair trade. The United States led the way in initiating the current set of negotiations on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), and we will continue to work to bring the Uruguay Round to a successful conclusion. We also remain committed to the full implementation of our Enterprise for the Americas Initiative, as well as to the completion of a North American Free Trade Agreement, which will create a thriving market of 360 million consumers and an estimated \$6 trillion annual output—the largest integrated market in the world. The United States is determined to advance our free trade agenda on both the multilateral and bilateral levels.

There remains tremendous export potential in America today, and much of it lies with small- and medium-sized companies. In fact, while the United States leads the world in exports, just 15 percent of our exporters account for more than 60 percent of the value of goods shipped across our borders. American businesses and industries, large and small, must take advantage of recent events in the world marketplace and recommit themselves to the aggressive pursuit of export markets abroad. The Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee, which is chaired by the Secretary of Commerce and comprised of 18 Federal agencies, was established to coordinate government export programs and to assist American businesses in their exporting efforts.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE BUSH, 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 the week of May 17 through May 23, 1992, as World Trade Week. I encourage all Americans to observe this week with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eighteenth day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and sixteenth.

GEORGE BUSH

Proclamation 6440 of May 19, 1992

National Maritime Day, 1992

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

This year, as we celebrate the 500th anniversary of Christopher Columbus' historic first journey to the Americas, we are especially mindful of our Nation's rich maritime history. The development of the American colonies was made possible by merchant ships, and commercial vessels later played a key role in our Nation's struggle for independence. Since that time, our civilian seafarers have continued to contribute to the freedom and security of the United States, as well as to its trade and commerce. Thus, it is with great pride and appreciation that we pause to honor the American merchant marine.

America's civilian seafarers uphold a long and distinguished tradition of service to our country, a legacy that includes outstanding contributions in peacetime and in time of peril. During the Revolutionary War, merchant craft supplemented the 34 ships of the Continental Navy and captured and sank some 600 British vessels, thereby frustrating enemy shipping and hastening the American victory. During World War II, the United States merchant marine provided a vital lifeline for liberty as it helped to transport materiel and reinforcements to American and Allied forces around the world. More than 700 U.S.-flag merchant ships were lost to enemy attacks during that conflict, and more than 6,000 civilian sailors gave their lives in support of the effort to defeat tyranny and aggression. We remain grateful to each of them.

Our Nation is also grateful to the merchant sailors who contributed to the success of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm a little over a year ago. Like generations who have gone before them, these civilian seafarers demonstrated an impressive degree of readiness, patriotism, and skill.

While past periods of armed conflict underscore the importance of a strong sealift capacity to the United States, on this occasion we also note the contributions that our merchant marine makes each day to our Nation's economic security and competitiveness. By carrying American agricultural products and other goods to foreign markets, merchant vessels contribute to our balance of payments and create jobs and opportunities for our citizens. Although our transportation system has expanded dramatically since the colonial era, shipping remains a vital part of U.S. trade and commerce.

The freedom and prosperity that we Americans enjoy today have been made possible with the help of our merchant marine, and it is fitting that we offer this special salute to our civilian seafarers, port terminal operators, and all those who serve in this Nation's maritime industries.

In recognition of the importance of the U.S. merchant marine, the Congress, by joint resolution approved May 20, 1933, has designated May 22 of each year as "National Maritime Day" and has requested the President to issue annually a proclamation calling for its appropriate observance. This date was chosen to commemorate the day in 1819 when the SS SAVANNAH left Savannah, Georgia, on the first transatlantic steamship voyage.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 22, 1992, as National Maritime Day. I encourage all Americans to observe this day by displaying the flag of the United States at their homes and other suitable places, and I request that all ships sailing under the American flag dress ship on that day.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this nineteenth day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and sixteenth.

GEORGE BUSH