

We also depend on America's maritime industry and Merchant Marine to fill a crucial role in protecting our national interests and the security of our allies. Throughout our history, in times of conflict or crisis, the owners, operators, and crews of U.S.-flag commercial vessels have provided vital sealift capability in support of our Armed Forces, advancing defense, peacekeeping, and humanitarian missions across the globe.

Our maritime industry has made many important contributions to the economic strength and defense capability of our Nation, and my Administration has worked with the Congress to implement new approaches to ensure the industry's continued viability. Our National Shipbuilding Initiatives are helping to improve the competitiveness of America's maritime industry by seeking to eliminate foreign subsidies, assisting the industry's international marketing efforts, eliminating unnecessary government regulations, and enhancing private sector financing of shipbuilding through Federal loan guarantees. Under the Maritime Security Program, the Federal Government contracts with owners and operators of U.S.-flag vessels to supplement our military sealift capability and gains access to a fleet of modern commercial ships and the sophisticated intermodal transportation system that supports it. Together, these programs protect our Nation's economic interests and our national security by ensuring that U.S.-flag vessels will always sail in the sea lanes of the world.

In recognition of the importance of the U.S. Merchant Marine, the Congress, by a joint resolution approved May 20, 1933, has designated May 22 as "National Maritime Day" and has authorized and requested the President to issue annually a proclamation calling for its appropriate observance.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 22, 1998, as National Maritime Day. I urge all Americans to observe this day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities and by displaying the flag of the United States at their homes and in their communities. I also request that all ships sailing under the American flag dress ship on that day.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-first day of May, 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-second.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 7099 of May 22, 1998

Prayer for Peace, Memorial Day, 1998

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

Today Americans live in a time of great hope. Our Nation is free, prosperous, and at peace. While very real dangers and problems still exist in the world, the Cold War is over, democracy is sweeping the globe, and old adversaries are forming new partnerships.

But the blessings we enjoy today are not the happy accidents of history; they are the culmination of promises kept by generations of young Americans and paid for by their courage and sacrifice. The promise of freedom articulated in our Declaration of Independence was made real by a ragtag army of brave Americans who were prepared to die for their convictions. The promise of unity was kept during the Civil War by thousands of Americans, black and white, who were willing to fight to preserve our Union. The promise of democracy was kept by the hundreds of thousands of Americans who fought and died in World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and the Persian Gulf. On home soil and in foreign lands, lost at sea or brought down from the skies, our young men and women in uniform have given their lives to keep their promise to America: to defend our freedom, to preserve our values, and to advance the ideals of democracy.

On this Memorial Day, we, too, have promises to keep. We remember and honor all those gallant Americans who, in the eloquent words of President Lincoln, "gave the last full measure of devotion" for the well-being of our Nation and their fellow citizens. We express our profound sympathy and gratitude to the families who have lost their sons and daughters in service to America. We promise to keep faith with all those who have died for our country by remaining vigilant in our defense of freedom and democracy. And we promise always to work for permanent peace in the world so that a new generation of Americans will never have to know the horrors of war.

In respect and recognition of the courageous men and women to whom we pay tribute, the Congress, by joint resolution approved on May 11, 1950 (64 Stat. 158), has requested the President to issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe each Memorial Day as a day of prayer for permanent peace and designating a period on that day when the American people might unite in prayer.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Memorial Day, May 25, 1998, as a day of prayer for permanent peace, and I designate the hour beginning at 3:00 p.m. EDT of that day as a time to join in prayer. I urge the press, radio, television, and all other information media to take part in this observance.

I also request the Governors of the United States and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the appropriate officials of all units of government, to direct that the flag be flown at half-staff during this Memorial Day on all buildings, grounds, and naval vessels throughout the United States and in all areas under its jurisdiction and control, and I request the people of the United States to display the flag at half-staff from their homes for the customary forenoon period.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-second day of May, 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-second.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON