

Conference for the Maintenance of Peace: “We took from our ancestors a great dream. We here offer it back as a great unified reality.” Once again, we stand ready to usher in a new era of cooperation to advance the security, prosperity, and liberty of all our peoples.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 14, 2010, as Pan American Day and April 11 through 17 as Pan American Week. I urge the Governors of the 50 States, the Governor of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the officials of other areas under the flag of the United States of America to honor these observances with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this ninth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand ten, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-fourth.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8496 of April 9, 2010

National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day, 2010

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

Our Nation’s former prisoners of war faced tremendous challenges and dangers to protect us all. Many gave their last full measure of devotion to defend our freedom, and we are forever in their debt. Each year, on National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day, the American people pay tribute to these heroes.

Through multiple wars, thousands of American service members have faced unimaginable cruelty and unspeakable treatment at the hands of foreign captors. Many sacrificed their own well-being to protect their fellow prisoners, the war effort, and our country. The families suffered as well, unsure of their loved ones’ fates, just as the captured warriors were unsure of what the next day would bring. Not all of these courageous men and women, who persevered bravely and sometimes alone, are prominently noted in our history books. Yet, their stories are etched in our national conscience, and their courage is enshrined in the tradition of honor and bravery that is the mark of our Armed Forces.

America’s former prisoners of war gave their freedom so that we can enjoy our own. We may never know the full extent of injuries received nor burdens borne by these heroes and their families, but neither shall we forget their selfless sacrifice and unshakeable resolve.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 9, 2010, as National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day. I call upon all Americans to observe this day of remembrance by honoring our service members, veterans, and all American prisoners of war. I

also call upon Federal, State, and local government officials and organizations to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this ninth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand ten, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-fourth.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8497 of April 12, 2010

**Honoring the Victims of the Montcoal, West Virginia,
Mine Disaster**

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

As a mark of respect for the memory of those who perished in the mine explosion in Montcoal, West Virginia, I hereby order, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, that the flag of the United States shall be flown at half-staff at all public buildings and grounds and at all military facilities and naval stations of the Federal Government in the State of West Virginia until sunset on April 18, 2010.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twelfth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand ten, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-fourth.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8498 of April 16, 2010

National Park Week, 2010

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

As a Nation, we have a responsibility to protect America's natural resources and noteworthy landmarks. During National Park Week, we celebrate the diversity, beauty, and history found in our National Park System.

For nearly 100 years, the American people have entrusted the National Park Service (NPS) to care for the places that fuel our spirit and define our character. By safeguarding our Nation's historical parks, sites, and monuments, NPS in turn preserves our rich culture and heritage. From the first glimpses of hope at the Statue of Liberty to the harrowing Battle of Gettysburg and the quest for freedom on the Underground Railroad, countless American stories are enshrined in these sites. By vis-