

their child in school. Our children will be “technologically literate”—and better prepared for the high-tech, high-wage jobs of the future. But we must also make sure that teachers are as comfortable with a computer as they are with the chalkboard. That is why Congress should support my \$800 million educational technology initiative—including more than \$100 million to train teachers in the latest technology.

By giving our children the skills they need to succeed in the jobs of the future, we will build a stronger nation for the 21st century. I particularly want to thank Vice President Gore, who has done so much to put the future at the fingertips of our children.

**Statement on the Proposed  
“Education Accountability Act”**

*March 1, 1999*

Today’s news of improvement in achievement for students in high-poverty schools is welcome, but we must not rest until all students meet the challenging standards we set for them. That is why I urge Senators in both parties not only to support this week’s vote to put 100,000 new, well-prepared teachers in the classroom but also to enact my “Education Accountability Act.” This act will help move our education system forward by ensuring that States and school districts end social promotion, phase out the use of unqualified teachers, turn around low-performing schools, provide parents with report cards on schools, and implement effective discipline policies. While our education reform efforts are clearly headed in the right direction, we must take these important steps to close the gap between students and increase the pace of reform.

**Proclamation 7169—Irish-American  
Heritage Month, 1999**

*March 1, 1999*

*By the President of the United States  
of America*

**A Proclamation**

During the month of March each year, as millions of Americans celebrate St. Patrick’s

Day, we remember with special pride our Irish heritage. We remember our ancestors who stood on Ireland’s western shores, yearning for the promise of America. Fleeing famine and injustice, they longed for a new world of opportunities. Millions of these courageous men and women set sail from Ireland, leaving behind all that they had ever known to seek the promise of America. They gave to their new homeland their strength and spirit, sinew and determination, eloquence and wit. In return, America offered them the opportunity for a better life, the chance to rise above poverty and discrimination, and a future where they could live out their dreams.

The Irish who came to America endured many hardships, but they prospered and helped to build our country with innumerable physical and intellectual contributions. They gave us Presidents like Woodrow Wilson, John Kennedy, and Ronald Reagan; patriots like John Barry and Stephen Moylan, who fought fiercely for American independence in the Revolutionary War; jurists like Justice William Brennan, who championed justice and equality; suffragists and social reformers like Maria McCreery; journalists, peacekeepers, artists, playwrights, labor leaders, and educators. These and so many other Irish Americans seized the opportunity of freedom America promised. From their grand literary tradition to their deep religious faith, Irish Americans and their descendants have enriched every facet of American history.

But Irish-American Heritage Month is a time to look to the future as well as to the past. Today we rejoice at the promise of peace in Northern Ireland and the resolve of her people to approach their differences not with weapons, but with words. While the path to peace is rarely easy, it is by necessity a community effort. Americans are a vital part of the process in Northern Ireland by virtue of our shared heritage and shared goal of lasting peace and a better future for all God’s children. By lending our hearts, minds, and prayers to the work of peace, we can best fulfill our obligation to the generations of Irish men and women who have given so much to our Nation’s life and history.

**Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton,** 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 March 1999 as Irish-American Heritage Month. I call upon all the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate ceremonies, programs, and activities.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this first day of March, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

**William J. Clinton**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:21 a.m., March 2, 1999]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on March 3.

**Proclamation 7170—Women’s History Month, 1999**

*March 1, 1999*

*By the President of the United States of America*

**A Proclamation**

A little more than a century ago, an editorial in the *Pittsburgh Dispatch* opposing women’s suffrage and criticizing women in the work force so infuriated a young reader that she wrote a letter in protest. Her articulate response prompted the newspaper’s editor to offer her a job, and thus Elizabeth Cochrane—later known as Nellie Bly—began her career in journalism. A pioneer of investigative reporting, she exposed the brutal conditions in the care of the mentally ill, reported on poor working conditions in factories, and wrote of the indignities suffered by women in prison. This year, as we reflect on America’s past in preparation for our celebration of the new millennium, we recognize that the talent, energy, intellect, and determination of countless women like Nellie Bly have shaped our destiny and enriched our society since our earliest days as a Nation.

From the women who organized the East India Company tea boycotts before the Boston Tea Party to Deborah Sampson, who fought as a soldier in the Revolutionary War; from Angelina and Sarah Grimké, who spoke out against slavery to Harriet Tubman, who risked her life as a conductor on the Underground Railroad; from suffragist Carrie Chapman Catt to sharecropper Fannie Lou Hamer, who faced violence and endured intimidation to become a leader of the Civil Rights movement; from environmentalist Rachel Carson, who changed our way of looking at the world, to physicist Chien-Shiung Wu, who changed our way of looking at the universe, women’s history is truly America’s history. That is why I was pleased to establish in July of last year the President’s Commission on the Celebration of Women in American History, whose recommendations will help us to better understand and rejoice to appreciate the role and accomplishments of women.

During Women’s History Month, we honor the generations of women who have served our Nation as doctors and scientists, teachers and factory workers, soldiers and secretaries, athletes and mothers. We honor the women who have worked the land, cared for children and the elderly, nurtured families and businesses, served in charitable organizations and public office. And we remember the good friends we have so recently lost—women such as Bella Abzug, Marjory Stoneman Douglas, and Florence Griffith-Joyner—whose achievements and example continue to light our lives.

But we must do more than remember. We must build on the legacy of the millions of women, whether renowned or anonymous, who have contributed so much to the strength and character of our Nation. We must ensure that women have equal access to the education and opportunities they need to excel. We must guarantee that women receive equal pay in the workplace. We must promote policies and programs—including affordable, high-quality child care—that enable working women to succeed both on the job and in their homes. And we must work to ensure that women have the comfort of knowing they can retire in security. Women who have gone before us accomplished so