

these skilled civilian seafarers, who continue to distinguish their profession and demonstrate their commitment to America's security through their unwavering support of our troops abroad in both peacekeeping and humanitarian operations.

History has taught us how important a nation's flag presence is on the high seas. Heeding the lessons of the past, the Congress and I reaffirmed our pledge for a strong U.S.-flag fleet when I signed into law the Maritime Security Act of 1996. This legislation sets the course for America's Merchant Marine into the 21st century, sustaining a strong sealift capability and bolstering national security. The Act will strengthen American maritime and allied industries, while energizing our efforts to further stimulate the economy through trade and commerce.

As we look to the challenges of the future, we recognize the continuing importance of our U.S. domestic maritime fleet to the maintenance of our Nation's commercial and defense maritime interests. I commend the merchant mariners whose unstinting service has helped maintain both our domestic and our international U.S. fleets.

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

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 22, 1997, 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-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-first.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

#### **Proclamation 7006 of May 22, 1997**

#### **Prayer for Peace, Memorial Day, 1997**

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

The observance of Memorial Day is one of America's noblest traditions. At its core lies the most basic of the beliefs on which our Nation was founded: that freedom is so precious it is worth the price of our lives to preserve it.

Throughout our history, we have been blessed by the courage and commitment of Americans who were willing to pay that price, and more than 1.3 million of them have died for our Nation. From Lexington and Concord to Iwo Jima and the Persian Gulf, on fields of battle across America and

around the world, our men and women in uniform have risked—and lost—their lives to protect America's interests, to advance the ideals of democracy, and to defend the liberty we hold so dear.

This spirit of selfless sacrifice is an unbroken thread woven through our history. Wherever they came from, whenever they served, our fallen heroes knew they were fighting to preserve our freedom. On Memorial Day we remember them, and we acknowledge that we stand as a great, proud, and free Nation because of their devotion.

But this is not the only day on which we honor their service and sacrifice. Whenever we lend our hearts and hands and voices to the work of peace in the world, whenever we show respect for the flag, cast a vote in an election, or exercise our freedoms of speech, assembly, and worship, we honor our fellow Americans who guaranteed those freedoms with their lives. In respect and recognition of these courageous men and women, the Congress, by joint resolution approved on May 11, 1950 (64 Stat. 158), requested that the President 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 26, 1997, as a day of prayer for permanent peace, and I designate the hour beginning in each locality at 11:00 a.m. 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-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-first.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

**Proclamation 7007 of May 30, 1997**

**To Modify Duty-Free Treatment Under the Generalized System of Preferences**

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

1. Pursuant to sections 501, 503(a)(1)(A), and 503(c)(1) of title V of the Trade Act of 1974 ("the 1974 Act"), 19 U.S.C. 2461–2466, as amended, the President may designate or withdraw designation of specified articles pro-