

more than 62,000 disasters in 1998. Whether it was a fire that destroyed a family's home or a hurricane that destroyed an entire region, the Red Cross reacted immediately with compassion, generosity, and humanity.

Yet the Red Cross does more than cope with emergencies. During the past year, volunteers collected and processed nearly six million units of life-saving blood for our Nation's hospitals and educated more than 11 million Americans through health and safety courses. The Red Cross also reached out to the men and women of our Armed Forces, their families, and our veterans, helping our military personnel keep in touch with home during family emergencies, offering confidential counseling and other support services, and assisting veterans in obtaining their benefits. In the past year alone, the American Red Cross provided more than 840,000 individual services to those who have given so much to protect our Nation and preserve our freedom.

During American Red Cross Month, as we take time to recognize this vital organization and all that it has accomplished, we can and should look forward with hope to the new century. For while we can never know the challenges we may face in the future, whether as individuals or as a national community, we do know that the American Red Cross will continue to serve, enabling us to meet those challenges and to recover from disaster. As Americans, let us sustain our long-standing support of the Red Cross and its humanitarian mission and renew our commitment to the ideals upon which it was founded. By reaching out with compassion and caring to help those in need, we can ensure a brighter future for our Nation and our world in the new millennium.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America and Honorary Chairman of the American Red Cross, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim March 1999 as American Red Cross Month. I urge all the people of the United States to show support for their local Red Cross chapters and to become active participants in advancing the noble mission of the Red Cross.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-fifth day of February, 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

Proclamation 7169 of March 1, 1999

Irish-American Heritage Month, 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

Proclamation 7170 of March 1, 1999

Women's History Month, 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 infuri-