

Presidential Documents

Title 3—**Proclamation 7005 of May 21, 1997****The President****National Maritime Day, 1997****By the President of the United States of America****A Proclamation**

Throughout America's history—from the Revolutionary War to today's global challenges—our United States Merchant Marine has fulfilled its mission with patriotism and efficiency, transporting our Nation's cargoes in times of both peace and conflict. Our Merchant Marine has shown its mettle time and again during major United States military engagements, proving to be a crucial component in support of our Armed Forces' efforts to protect our national interests and defend our freedom. Today, we salute 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.

