

the first river Congress, over 20 years ago, set aside in the national wild rivers act. They thought it was the wildest of all the rivers in the United States. [Laughter] And we explored caves that still had ammunition stored from the Civil War. We talked to mountain people who had never been more than 20 miles away from home. It was one of the most remarkable experiences I have ever had. She taught me a great deal about American folklore and literature and life. And just before we walked out here, she gave me a contribution for the time capsule, the textbook with which she taught our class so many years ago.

So if you will forgive me, I would like to close this event by asking my teacher to come up here and accept my thanks for being a working woman over 30 years ago. Thank you very much.

Again, let me thank American Home Products. Let me thank all of you for coming. Let me thank Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson. And I've just been told that Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey is also here somewhere; thank you. There she is, the heroine of the State of the Union Address.

I thank you all. Please stay around. Have a good time. We're delighted to see you. Goodbye. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:38 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, at a 75th anniversary celebration of the Department of Labor's Women's Bureau. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

### **Proclamation 6803—National Maritime Day, 1995**

*May 19, 1995*

*By the President of the United States of America*

#### **A Proclamation**

The United States owes much to our merchant sailors. At our Nation's beginning, these outstanding citizens opened new avenues of commerce and helped nurture a fledgling democracy into a beacon of freedom for people around the world. Since President Franklin D. Roosevelt first proclaimed National Maritime Day 62 years ago,

the U.S. Merchant Marine has built on its legacy of patriotism. Its great tradition of courage and valor is an inspiration to all Americans.

This year, as we honor those who served and sacrificed for our Nation during World War II, the contributions of the U.S. Merchant Marine are a special source of pride. We will always remember the heroism of those mariners and the dangers they faced to protect our liberty.

America's Merchant Marine and civilian seafarers have put themselves at risk time and again to support our Armed Forces. They provided pivotal service during OPERATION DESERT STORM, during America's humanitarian mission in Somalia, and throughout OPERATION RESTORE DEMOCRACY in Haiti.

Today, our country remains determined to maintain a strong U.S. flag presence on the high seas, a commitment central to advancing our Nation's national and economic security. I urge Americans to join efforts in support of maritime revitalization legislation and our ongoing shipbuilding production program. Americans' pioneering spirit has endowed our Nation with the most innovative maritime technologies and the most skilled innovative maritime technologies and the most skilled maritime labor force on Earth. Working together, we can preserve this critical advantage for generations to come.

In recognition of the importance of the U.S. Merchant Marine, the Congress, by a joint 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 appropriate observance.

**Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton,** President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 22, 1995, as National Maritime Day. I urge the people of the United States 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 nineteenth day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and nineteenth.

**William J. Clinton**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:24 a.m., May 22, 1995]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on May 23. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

### **The President's Radio Address**

*May 20, 1995*

Good morning. Today the Secretary of the Treasury, who oversees the Secret Service, will announce that from now on the two blocks of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House will be closed to motor vehicle traffic.

Pennsylvania Avenue has been routinely open to traffic for the entire history of our Republic. Through four Presidential assassinations and eight unsuccessful attempts on the lives of Presidents, it's been open. Through a civil war, two world wars, and the Gulf war, it was open. But now it must be closed. This decision follows a lengthy review by the Treasury Department, the Secret Service, and independent experts, including distinguished Americans who served in past administrations of both Democratic and Republican Presidents.

This step is necessary in the view of the Director of the Secret Service and the panel of experts to protect the President and his family, the White House itself, all the staff and others who work here, and the visitors and distinguished foreign and domestic guests who come here every day.

The Secret Service risk their lives to protect the President and his family. For 130 years, they have stood watch over the people and the institutions of our democracy. They are the best in the world at what they do. Though I am reluctant to accept any decision that might inconvenience the people who work or visit our Nation's Capital, I believe

it would be irresponsible to ignore their considered opinion or to obstruct their decisions about the safety of our public officials, especially given the strong supporting voice of the expert panel.

Clearly, this closing is necessary because of the changing nature and scope of the threat of terrorist actions. It should be seen as a responsible security step necessary to preserve our freedom, not part of a long-term restriction of our freedom.

First, let me make it clear that I will not in any way allow the fight against domestic and foreign terrorism to build a wall between me and the American people. I will be every bit as active and in touch with ordinary American citizens as I have been since I took office. Pennsylvania Avenue may be closed to cars and trucks, but it will remain open to the people of America. If you want to visit the White House, you can still do that just as you always could, and I hope you will. If you want to have your picture taken out in front of the White House, please do so. If you want to come here and protest our country's policies, you are still welcome to do that as well. And now you will be more secure in all these activities because it will be less likely that you could become an innocent victim of those who would do violence against symbols of our democracy.

Closing Pennsylvania Avenue to motor vehicles is a practical step to protect against the kind of attack we saw in Oklahoma City, but I won't allow the people's access to the White House and their President to be curtailed. The two blocks of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House will be converted into a pedestrian mall. Free and public tours will continue as they always have. For most Americans, this won't change much beyond the traffic patterns here in Washington. For people who work in Washington, DC, we will work hard to reroute the traffic in cooperation with local officials in the least burdensome way possible.

Now let's think for a minute about what this action says about the danger terrorism poses to the openness of our society or to any free society. The fact that the Secret Service feels compelled to close Pennsylvania Avenue is an important reminder that we have to come together as a people and hold