

cratic opposition, including Aung San Suu Kyi and the National League for Democracy (NLD).

I have therefore imposed sanctions under the terms of the "Cohen-Feinstein" Amendment, a bipartisan measure that I fully support. As contained in the Burma policy provision of the Consolidated Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 1997 (Public Law 104-208), this amendment calls for investment sanctions if the Government of Burma has physically harmed, rearrested for political acts, or exiled Aung San Suu Kyi, or has committed large-scale repression of, or violence against, the democratic opposition. It is my judgment that recent actions by the regime in Rangoon constitute such repression.

Beyond its pattern of repressive human rights practices, the Burmese authorities also have committed serious abuses in their recent military campaign against Burma's Karen minority, forcibly conscripting civilians and compelling thousands to flee into Thailand. The SLORC regime has overturned the Burmese people's democratically elected leadership. Under this brutal military regime, Burma remains the world's leading producer of opium and heroin, and tolerates drug trafficking and traffickers in defiance of the views of the international community. The regime has shown little political will to stop the narcotics exports from Burma and prevent illicit drug money from enriching those who would flaunt international rules and profit by destroying the lives of millions.

The United States and other members of the international community have firmly and repeatedly taken steps to encourage democratization and human rights in Burma. Through our action today, we seek to keep faith with the people of Burma, who made clear their support for human rights and democracy in 1990 elections which the regime chose to disregard. We join with many others in the international community calling for reform in Burma, and we emphasize that the U.S.-Burma relationship will improve only as there is progress on democratization and respect for human rights.

In particular, we once again urge the authorities in Burma to lift restrictions on Aung San Suu Kyi and the political opposition, respect the rights of free expression, assembly,

and association, and undertake a dialog on Burma's political future that includes leaders of the NLD and the ethnic minorities.

Proclamation 6995—Law Day, U.S.A., 1997

April 22, 1997

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

This is the 40th year that Americans have celebrated the first day of May as Law Day, a special time to reflect on our legal heritage. It is an opportunity for all Americans to pause and consider how the rule of law has contributed to the freedoms we enjoy, and to our greatness as a Nation.

The theme of this year's Law Day commemoration, "Celebrate Your Freedom," focuses on the one concept that most defines us as a Nation. It was freedom that we fought for when we created this country. It is freedom that still sets us apart from many of the world's nations. And it is freedom's lamp that still beckons the oppressed to America from all parts of the globe.

The quest to ensure our freedom is the essence of what it means to be an American, and the bulwark of our freedom is the law and the legal system. James Madison once observed that if men were angels, governments would not be necessary. Laws are the instruments by which the people, through their government, protect themselves from, and regulate their relations with, each other. At the same time, laws also serve to restrain the power of that government. Finding the proper balance between the conflicting interests and rights of individuals, corporations, and government has never been easy. But we rely on the rule of law itself to protect all that is most precious to us. Without it, other nations have descended into a state where force alone prevails and justice is a mere hope.

Thanks to the genius of our Founders and the Constitutional system they created, Americans have witnessed the steady march of progress toward an open, inclusive society. We vote in free, fair elections. We worship according to our own faith. We associate

freely with whomever we choose. And we are able to express our disagreements with our government freely and openly. These rights, routinely accepted today, have been maintained only through years of testing and reinforcement in our Federal and State courts, which have continued to extend freedom and liberty across the land.

So when we celebrate our freedom, we also celebrate a system of law that makes freedom possible. For more than two centuries, we have prospered and endured because we have relied on that system of law. We must keep that system strong and vibrant in our national life.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, in accordance with Public Law 87-20 of April 7, 1961, do hereby proclaim May 1, 1997, as Law Day. I urge the people of the United States to use this occasion to consider anew how our laws protect our freedoms and contribute to our national well-being. I call upon members of the legal profession, civic associations, educators, librarians, public officials, and the media to promote the observance of this day with appropriate programs and activities. I also call upon public officials to display the flag of the United States on all government buildings throughout the day.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-second day of April, 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

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Remarks on the Chemical Weapons Convention

April 23, 1997

The President. Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Wallace, for your remarks and for your service; Mr. Vice President, General Shalikashvili. Thank you, General Scowcroft, for being here. Thank you,

Admiral Zumwalt, for being here and for being on this issue for so long. General Jones, Admiral Arthur, to all the distinguished veterans and veterans groups who are with us today and to the men and women in uniform who are here today. And I'd like to say a special word of thanks to General Powell and to Senator Dole for being here.

You have witnessed today, I believe, an example of America at its best, working as it should, putting the interests of the American people and the interests of the men and women of America in uniform first. And it is something for which I am very grateful.

This treaty will make our troops safer. It will make our Nation more secure. It will at least reduce the likelihood that innocent civilians here and around the world will be exposed in the future to horrible chemical weapons. That is why every Chairman of the Joint Chiefs for the last 20 years and all the military leaders and political leaders and veterans you have heard today have supported it.

All the arguments have been made, so I would like to tell you a story. We now know that chemical weapons have bedeviled Americans in uniform from Belleau Wood in World War I to Baghdad in the Gulf war. We know that thousands were injured or killed by chemical warfare in World War I. And I thought it would be a wonderful thing today to show what this treaty is all about, to have one remarkable American veteran of World War I who survived such an attack. And he is here with us today, Mr. George Clark. Thank you for coming, sir. God bless you.

Mr. Clark was just in the Oval Office with all of us. And Senator Dole apparently asked him if he was a contemporary of Senator Thurmond, and he said he thought Senator Thurmond was a little young for the heavy responsibilities that he has enjoyed. [*Laughter*]

As a 16-year-old marine, almost 80 years ago, George Clark fought in the Battle of Soissons in July of 1918. Taking cover in a ditch during fierce fighting, his squad came under artillery attack by mustard gas. Every man except him was either killed or wounded as the poisonous fog settled on the ground. But Corporal Clark, who received the Purple