

had been killed, 2 months after Martin Luther King had been killed, 9 weeks after Lyndon Johnson said he couldn't run for President because the country was too divided over the Vietnam war. Mr. Nixon got elected President. He was a very able man, but he got elected President on one of these "us" and "them" divisive campaigns. He represented the Silent Majority, and those of us that were on the other side, we were in the loud minority. We were kind of out of the club there. And a few months later, the longest expansion in American history was over, boom! And we blew a chance to solve a lot of our problems in a wholesome, peaceful way.

Now, I'm not running for anything, but as an American citizen, I want to tell you, I've waited 35 years for that opportunity to roll around again for my country, where we could build the future of our dreams for our children. Ideas matter; there are differences. We've got to do this together.

The most important thing right now is that we focus on the importance of this election. Do not take our prosperity for granted. Do not take our social progress for granted. Do not take your ability to even come to something like this for granted. We've got to make the most of this. If we do, we'll be proud for the rest of our lives. If we don't, we'll never forgive ourselves. This is a moment for making tomorrow. That's why you came today. If somebody asks, you tell them that.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:05 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to luncheon hosts Arnold and Celia Lupin; Harry Lee, sheriff, Jefferson Parish, LA; Edward G. Rendell, general chair, Democratic National Committee (DNC); luncheon cochair Ray Reggie; David Nelson Young, Louisiana DNC national committeeman; Mary Lou Winters, vice chair, Louisiana State Democratic Party; Louisiana State Representative Karen Carter; Sybil Morial, wife of Mayor Marc H. Morial of New Orleans; and Representative William J. Jefferson and his wife, Andrea.

Proclamation 7288—Pan American Day and Pan American Week, 2000

April 8, 2000

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

This year on Pan American Day and during Pan American Week, we celebrate the springtime of a new century in which the fundamental ideals of democracy and human rights are blossoming across our hemisphere. We stand at the threshold of a new era of economic development and prosperity with a common determination to meet the challenges and seize the opportunities that face the Americas.

Building on the agreements forged at the last two Summits of the Americas in Miami and Santiago, we are witnessing unprecedented cooperation within our hemisphere. Efforts such as the negotiations on a Free Trade Area of the Americas, now progressing toward a concrete agreement in 2005, exemplify our commitment to building a self-sustaining and widely shared prosperity. We continue to work creatively through the Organization of American States to encourage constitutional solutions to political crises such as those that occurred in Paraguay and Ecuador. And we have witnessed elections in our region that were models of civic participation and a testament to the strength and vibrancy of democratic government in the Western Hemisphere. Such achievements illustrate that the well-being of our neighbors is fundamental to our own security and prosperity. We look forward to the Third Summit of the Americas in Quebec City, where the democratically elected leaders of 34 nations from North, Central, and South America will gather to review our progress, identify new challenges, and further enhance our cooperation.

Even with our significant progress, however, challenges remain. The 34 free and democratically elected nations of this hemisphere must work together to ensure that

Cuba, the only country that has not embraced our common vision, becomes a member of our community of democracies. By doing so, we can ensure that all the people in our hemisphere share in the blessings of freedom and in the promise of the global economy, living and working and raising their families in dignity and with hope for the future.

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 Friday, April 14, 2000, as Pan American Day and April 9 through April 15, 2000 as Pan American Week. I urge the Governors of the 50 States, the Governor of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the officials of other areas under the flag of the United States to honor these observances with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this eighth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fourth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., April 12, 2000]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on April 13.

Proclamation 7289—National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day, 2000

April 8, 2000

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

As we stand at the dawn of a new century, we reflect with pride on all that our Nation has accomplished in the 224 years since we first declared our independence. Today we enjoy unprecedented peace and prosperity, and, as it has for generations, America shines as a beacon of democracy, freedom, and opportunity for peoples around the world.

Yet the blessings we rejoice in today were won at great cost. Millions of young Americans who stepped forward in times of crisis or conflict to defend our Nation and uphold our values around the world sacrificed their freedom and lost their lives. The century just past will forever be known as the American century, not only because of our economic strength, military might, and technological prowess, but also because of the character, determination, and indomitable spirit our people demonstrated time and again.

That character and spirit have never been more evident than when Americans have been held captive as prisoners of war. Suffering hunger, fear, isolation, and uncertainty, stripped of their freedom and often subjected to physical and psychological torture, American POWs nonetheless continued to serve our Nation with honor, dignity, and remarkable courage. For many, the long, agonizing days stretched into years, and the loss of freedom and the cruel separation from family, home, and friends left scars that the passage of time can never erase.

We owe a profound debt of gratitude to these heroes who stood face to face with the forces of tyranny and oppression, true to our country and to the spirit of freedom even in captivity. We owe a debt as well to their families, whose faith and fortitude have been an unceasing source of strength to our Nation in many of our darkest hours. As we observe this special day for the first time in this new century, let us remember and honor the sacrifices of America's prisoners of war and their families; and let us keep faith with them by remaining resolute in defending liberty and securing a just and peaceful world for the generations to come.

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 April 9, 2000, as National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day. I call upon all Americans to join me in remembering former American prisoners of war who suffered the hardships of enemy captivity. I also call upon Federal, State, and local government officials and private organizations to observe this day with