

That work, too, can be dangerous for those who follow in your footsteps in the peace-keeping missions. But it is very much in our interest to help them rebuild, and to draw together—to teach them what we already know—that if they have something to look forward to and something to work for and something to get up in the morning and smile about, it's a lot easier for people with superficial differences to find common interests. And so we have to be a part of that, as well.

Whenever I come to Missouri, a State I've always loved, since I grew up to the south, in Arkansas, I think of President Truman, who was the President when I was born and whom my family idolized. Congressman Skelton knew Harry Truman, and I think that we would all admit that Harry Truman knew something about standing up for what he believed in. President Truman would be very, very proud of the Whiteman family today.

In the final days of World War II, Harry Truman said, "It is easier to remove tyrants and destroy concentration camps than it is to kill the ideas which gave them birth and strength. Victory on the battlefield was essential, but it was not enough. For a good peace, a lasting peace, decent people of the Earth must remain determined to strike down the evil spirit which has hung over the world for the last decade."

Well, the decent people of the world are determined to rebuild Kosovo and the Balkans. Think about the spirit.

If you don't remember anything else I said today, remember this. Your victory was achieved for two reasons: one, the power and skill and courage of our pilots and our crews and the awesome capacity of our planes and our bombs; but two, the power of the example that you set in our military, a stern rebuke, on a daily basis, to ethnic cleansing and a reaffirmation of the moral worth and the sheer joy of working together as equal human beings for a good cause.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:50 a.m. in Building 1117. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Lester Lyles, USAF, Vice Chief of Staff, U.S. Air Force; Brig. Gen. Leroy Barnidge, Jr., USAF, Wing Commander, 509th Bomb Wing; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). This item

was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Proclamation 7203—Gay and Lesbian Pride Month, 1999

June 11, 1999

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Thirty years ago this month, at the Stonewall Inn in New York City, a courageous group of citizens resisted harassment and mistreatment, setting in motion a chain of events that would become known as the Stonewall Uprising and the birth of the modern gay and lesbian civil rights movement. Gays and lesbians, their families and friends, celebrate the anniversary of Stonewall every June in America as Gay and Lesbian Pride Month; and, earlier this month, the National Park Service added the Stonewall Inn, as well as the nearby park and neighborhood streets surrounding it, to the National Register of Historic Places.

I am proud of the measures my Administration has taken to end discrimination against gays and lesbians and ensure that they have the same rights guaranteed to their fellow Americans. Last year, I signed an Executive order that amends Federal equal employment opportunity policy to prohibit discrimination in the Federal civilian work force based on sexual orientation. We have also banned discrimination based on sexual orientation in the granting of security clearances. As a result of these and other policies, gay and lesbian Americans serve openly and proudly throughout the Federal Government. My Administration is also working with congressional leaders to pass the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, which would prohibit most private employers from firing workers solely because of their sexual orientation.

America's diversity is our greatest strength. But, while we have come a long way on our journey toward tolerance, understanding, and mutual respect, we still have a long way to go in our efforts to end discrimination. During the past year, people across our country have been shaken by violent acts that

struck at the heart of what it means to be an American and at the values that have always defined us as a Nation. In 1997, the most recent year for which we have statistics, there were more than 8,000 reported hate crimes in our country—almost one an hour. Now is the time for us to take strong and decisive action to end all hate crimes, and I reaffirm my pledge to work with the Congress to pass the Hate Crimes Prevention Act.

But we cannot achieve true tolerance merely through legislation; we must change hearts and minds as well. Our greatest hope for a just society is to teach our children to respect one another, to appreciate our differences, and to recognize the fundamental values that we hold in common. As part of our efforts to achieve this goal, earlier this spring, I announced that the Departments of Justice and Education will work in partnership with educational and other private sector organizations to reach out to students and teach them that our diversity is a gift. In addition, the Department of Education has issued landmark guidance that explains Federal standards against sexual harassment and prohibits sexual harassment of all students regardless of their sexual orientation; and I have ordered the Education Department's civil rights office to step up its enforcement of anti-discrimination and harassment rules. That effort has resulted in a groundbreaking guide that provides practical guidance to school administrators and teachers for developing a comprehensive approach to protecting all students, including gays and lesbians, from harassment and violence.

Since our earliest days as a Nation, Americans have strived to make real the ideals of equality and freedom so eloquently expressed in our Declaration of Independence and Constitution. We now have a rare opportunity to enter a new century and a new millennium as one country, living those principles, recognizing our common values, and building on our shared strengths.

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 June 1999 as Gay and Lesbian Pride Month. I encourage all

Americans to observe this month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities that celebrate our diversity, and to remember throughout the year the gay and lesbian Americans whose many and varied contributions have enriched our national life.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of June, 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

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., June 15, 1999]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on June 16. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Proclamation 7204—Flag Day and National Flag Week, 1999

June 11, 1999

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Since its adoption in 1777 by the Continental Congress, the Stars and Stripes has symbolized the promise of America. This promise—of equality, justice under the law, freedom from tyranny, and inclusion in a government of the people—beckons immigrants to our shores today just as it has for more than two centuries. Each time the Stars and Stripes is raised over our homes, public buildings, schools, or community gathering places, it proclaims that our Nation's great experiment in democracy is alive and well.

The stately design of the Stars and Stripes celebrates America's diversity while proclaiming the unity of our Nation. Its white stars, whose shifting constellation has chronicled the growth of our Nation, are the ancient symbols of a sovereign domain; they lie on a field of blue that represents loyalty, justice, and truth. Thus our flag describes the unique Republic designed by our founders, in which States that vary widely in geography, history, and culture are joined in sustaining