

Statement on United States Policy To Protect Sunken State Craft *January 19, 2001*

Thousands of United States Government vessels, aircraft, and spacecraft ("State craft"), as well as similar State craft of foreign nations, lie within, and in waters beyond, the territorial sea and contiguous zone. Because of recent advances in science and technology, many of these sunken Government vessels, aircraft, and spacecraft have become accessible to salvors, treasure hunters, and others. The unauthorized disturbance or recovery of these sunken State craft and any remains of their crews and passengers is a growing concern both within the United States and internationally. In addition to deserving treatment as gravesites, these sunken State craft may contain objects of a sensitive national security, archeological, or historical nature. They often also contain unexploded ordnance that could pose a danger to human health and the marine environment if disturbed, or other substances, including fuel oil and other hazardous liquids, that likewise pose a serious threat to human health and the marine environment if released.

I believe that United States policy should be clearly stated to meet this growing concern.

Pursuant to the property clause of Article IV of the Constitution, the United States retains title indefinitely to its sunken State craft unless

title has been abandoned or transferred in the manner Congress authorized or directed. The United States recognizes the rule of international law that title to foreign sunken State craft may be transferred or abandoned only in accordance with the law of the foreign flag State.

Further, the United States recognizes that title to a United States or foreign sunken State craft, wherever located, is not extinguished by passage of time, regardless of when such sunken State craft was lost at sea.

International law encourages nations to preserve objects of maritime heritage wherever located for the benefit of the public.

Those who would engage in unauthorized activities directed at sunken State craft are advised that disturbance or recovery of such craft should not occur without the express permission of the sovereign and should only be conducted in accordance with professional scientific standards and with the utmost respect for any human remains.

The United States will use its authority to protect and preserve sunken State craft of the United States and other nations, whether located in the waters of the United States, a foreign nation, or in international waters.

Statement on Efforts To Promote Responsible Fatherhood *January 19, 2001*

Over the past 8 years, Vice President Al Gore and I have worked hard to promote responsible and engaged fatherhood. On Father's Day 2000, I asked six agencies to jointly produce Federal guidance that would help States and communities strengthen the role of fathers in families. Today I am pleased to announce the release of this guidance, entitled "Meeting the Challenge: What the Federal Government Can Do To Support Responsible Fatherhood Efforts," which provides valuable information about Federal resources and policies.

This guidance represents a critical step in the ongoing Federal efforts to promote responsible

fatherhood. Vice President Gore's 1994 Family Reunion conference on the role of men in families significantly raised the visibility of fathers, and in 1995 I issued an Executive memorandum calling on Federal agencies to review every program, policy, and initiative to ensure that meaningful efforts were being made to strengthen fathers' involvement with their children. Since then, many agencies throughout the Federal Government have developed fatherhood initiatives, and collaboration—among agencies and with private partners—has been the cornerstone of these efforts.

Today, this interagency work is bearing fruit, not only in the form of the guidance being released today but also through the many innovative projects that are highlighted within the report. For example, the Departments of Education and Health and Human Services (HHS) worked together on the Fathers Matter initiative, producing a CD-ROM to help teachers, early childhood educators, and social service and health providers engage fathers in their children's learning. The Departments of Labor (DOL) and HHS, with the Departments of Justice (DOJ), Education, and Housing and Urban Development, have worked together to improve employment and training opportunities for fathers through the implementation of the welfare-to-work program, which I fought to fund

in 1997 and extended this year. And through the reentry initiative that I proposed and Congress funded in the fiscal year 2001 budget, DOJ, DOL, and HHS are working together to address the needs of ex-offenders, many of whom are fathers, as they rejoin their families and communities.

I want to applaud the leadership of HHS on this project and commend the Departments of Agriculture, Education, Housing and Urban Development, Justice, and Labor for their valuable contributions. I encourage States, tribes, communities, and nonprofit organizations to use this new resource to explore the exciting possibilities for strengthening the role of fathers in the lives of their children.

Statement on the American Heritage Rivers Initiative *January 19, 2001*

Today my administration transmitted to the Congress the "Progress Report of the American Heritage Rivers Interagency Committee and Task Force." The successes of the American Heritage Rivers initiative, detailed in this report, are a tribute to the efforts of thousands of citizens all across America who committed themselves to proving that what is good for the environment is also good for the economy, and to making their communities better places in which to live, work, and do business.

When I traveled to North Carolina in July 1998 to designate 14 rivers across the country as American Heritage Rivers, I was optimistic about the prospects for restoring these waterways and reinvigorating the communities they help sustain. Since that time, this initiative has helped steer hundreds of millions of dollars in Federal assistance to these communities to revitalize riverfronts, restore precious habitat, preserve cultural and historic resources, save open space, create recreational opportunities, and spur economic growth.

At the same time, this initiative has helped forge new partnerships between citizens, busi-

nesses, grassroots organizations, and local, State, and Federal agencies. And it has helped demonstrate how the Federal Government can work as a good neighbor in support of local communities, helping them realize their own visions for their rivers and their future.

I want to thank the many Members of Congress who supported this initiative, including the late Senator John Chafee; his son, Senator Lincoln Chafee; Senators Mary Landrieu, Carl Levin, and John Kerry; and Representatives Paul Kanjorski, Sue Kelly, Corrine Brown and William Jefferson. Three years after I announced it, the American Heritage Rivers initiative is a strong community-driven effort with broad and increasingly bipartisan support.

I urge Congress and the incoming administration to build upon the great strides made in just the last few years by acting on several recommendations contained in this report. Building on this record of progress will enable communities across the country to continue their efforts to bring new vitality to rivers that are truly the lifeblood of our Nation.