

workers across our land. Join me in renewing our commitment to making their health and safety a national priority.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this thirteenth day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-first.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 6917 of September 17, 1996

Citizenship Day and Constitution Week, 1996

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

At a time when many nations around the world are becoming ever more factionalized, the citizens of the United States are blessed with an overarching identity as Americans. The wisdom of our Nation's founders, as embodied in our Constitution, still binds us in a united community of purpose and ideals. Our Constitution invites us all to recognize ourselves as Americans first—not to de-emphasize our personal or familial roots, but to celebrate the diversity that adds strength to our national character. As Daniel Webster put it more than a century ago, we share "One country, one constitution, one destiny."

This week we celebrate the Constitution of the United States of America. This remarkably flexible document has stood for more than two centuries as a unique achievement in the world of nations. The more we study and understand the Constitution, the more we grow, mature, and blossom as citizens. This process links us to the Nation's founders by making us part of their great adventure in democracy. By living our daily lives according to the founders' principles, we keep alive their vision and demonstrate its truth and wisdom.

In order to become a naturalized U.S. citizen, immigrants undertake a formal study of the guiding principles and institutions of American government. Those who choose to become citizens proudly welcome this responsibility. In fact, all of us would do well to emulate the zeal and interest shown by these newest Americans, who deeply appreciate their bond with the noble tradition of our Constitution. Therefore, on this occasion I call upon all Americans to consider the wonderful blessings of their United States citizenship and to look upon our Constitution and celebrate the freedom and protection that it has always afforded us.

In commemoration of the signing of our Constitution and in recognition of the importance of informed, responsible citizenship, the Congress, by joint resolution of February 29, 1952 (36 U.S.C. 153), designated September 17 as "Citizenship Day," and by joint resolution of August 2, 1956 (36 U.S.C. 159), requested the President to proclaim the week beginning September 17 and ending September 23 of each year as "Constitution Week."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim September 17, 1996, as Citizen-

ship Day and September 17 through September 23, 1996, as Constitution Week, and urge all Americans to join in observing these occasions with appropriate programs and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this seventeenth day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-first.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 6918 of September 18, 1996

National POW/MIA Recognition Day, 1996

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Since our country's birth, Americans have responded to military threats against liberty and democracy, whether at home or in remote areas of the world. The young men and women of our Armed Forces understand the need to resist oppression, and they have willingly put themselves in harm's way around the globe to do so. Those young Americans who stand in the defense of freedom are our country's most precious natural resource.

It is particularly painful when these brave Americans are made Prisoners of War, or are classified as Missing in Action. They have earned our deep appreciation and respect for the great sacrifices they have made so that all of us can continue to enjoy the privileges of liberty. In keeping faith with them, we continue our concerted efforts to determine the fate of all those who are unaccounted for and to bring home the remains of those who have perished.

The grief for our prisoners of war and those missing in action is most intense, of course, among their families and loved ones at home, who wait—often for years, and sometimes in vain—for confirmation of their fate. These families display their own courage too, by their endurance in the face of deep anxiety. Their cause is our cause, and we pledge ourselves to them anew on this special day.

On September 20, 1996, the flag of the National League of Families of American Prisoners of War and Missing in Southeast Asia, a black-and-white banner symbolizing all of America's missing, will be flown over the White House, the United States Capitol, the United States Departments of State, Defense, and Veterans Affairs, the Selective Service System headquarters, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the Korean War Veterans Memorial, and national cemeteries across the country.

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 September 20, 1996, as National POW/MIA Recognition Day. I ask all Americans to join me in honoring former American POWs and those Americans still unaccounted for as a result of their service to our great Nation. I also encourage the American people to express their gratitude to the families of these missing Americans for their perseverance through the