

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 20, 1995

Greetings to all those celebrating the 213th anniversary of the designation of the bald eagle as the national symbol of the United States of America.

Courageous, strong, and free, this magnificent bird is a cherished symbol of all that is great about America. But the bald eagle is more than a symbol -- it is a reflection of our commitment to preserve and pass on to our children the precious natural gifts with which our nation has been blessed.

By 1963, after decades of habitat destruction and excessive hunting, the bald eagle population in our lower 48 states had fallen to only about 417 nesting pairs. Yet thanks to the determined and tireless efforts of federal and state wildlife agencies, conservation and industrial groups, scientists, and private citizens, more than 4,000 pairs of adult bald eagles and perhaps as many as 5,000 juveniles now flourish in this same area. And the Alaskan population of bald eagles remains healthy and safe.

As Americans join in commemorating this special anniversary, we can take pride in the continuing recovery of the bald eagle. Let us renew our dedication to protecting this irreplaceable national treasure.

Bill Clinton