

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY SECRETARY BROCK ADAMS, FIRST DAY ISSUE CEREMONIES HONORING THE COAST GUARD AND THE COAST GUARD CUTTER EAGLE SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, AUGUST 4, 1978

I'm delighted to be here to take part in these "first day of issue" ceremonies. And I'm pleased that the Post Office has chosen to honor the Coast Guard -- and the good ship Eagle -- on its new post card.

I believe this is the Eagle's first visit to Seattle. I understand it was a successful voyage from New London, and a great experience for the cadets.

We are commemorating today the 188th birthday of the United States Coast Guard.

On August 4, 1790, George Washington signed a bill authorizing the building of ten 50-foot, two-masted boats -- to guard the coast against smugglers.

The government couldn't afford larger cutters -- or a bigger fleet. The contract price was \$1,000 each, with no feasibility studies and no provision for an overrun!

Aside from the Coast Guard anniversary, it is a good time to be here because it is Seafair Week.

During the years I represented the Seventh District in Congress I supported adjournment in August so that I could come home for the Seafair activities. If there's a better place to enjoy summer than on or along Puget Sound, I have yet to find it.

When we talk about transportation today we so often think of highways and airports and railroads. And all of those are important, and we're working hard in the Executive branch and in Congress to improve those forms of transportation and make them more efficient. But we also have a rich seafaring tradition in this country, and an excellent system of waterways and port facilities. We still depend heavily on water transportation to move our food and fuel supplies and the raw materials so essential to our industry. I believe we must protect our water resources while we develop them.

That's why -- as you know -- I issued a temporary order last March banning tankers of more than 125,000 tons from Puget Sound until the environmental risks of such traffic could be fully assessed.

The Sound belongs to all the people of this area and its esthetic as well as its utilitarian values must be considered. We need the Alaskan oil. We've got to move it to the refineries. But we also know what damage a major oil spill could cause and I think we simply have to weigh the issues and take the most prudent course possible.

What I'm saying is that we can no longer abuse our marine resources or treat our waters as vast dumping grounds. The days of environmental piracy are over. Even now we are working to insure that future development of the ocean's natural riches will be conducted with due regard for both the rights of others and the necessities of conservation. Our people are working with our foreign service officers in the State Department to negotiate and secure acceptance of a new international marine treaty -- the Law of the Sea. The movement of this treaty through the councils of the United Nations is not progressively easily. There is dissension and disagreement. But our position is firm and we are confident of its final acceptance.

At the same time, we are moving forward on marine matters of domestic concern. As I have already mentioned, we are taking measures to lessen the risk of collisions or groundings and negotiating international standards on tanker construction and equipment.

We are also protecting our coastal fisheries -- especially the rich fishing grounds of the Northwest Pacific -- against depredation by foreign interests. Aerial and vessel patrols are enforcing new laws to manage and conserve U.S. fisheries.

I mentioned these activities because they all involve the skills and responsibilities of the Coast Guard which I am proud to have as a part of the Department of Transportation.

It's the Coast Guard we honor today and, in particular, the Eagle. Those who have sailed the Eagle to this port are volunteers -- as are all the men and women in the Coast Guard. They join because they love the sea. And there's nothing better, I'm told, than a square-rigger with billowing sails to make a sailor feel at home and at peace with the world.

So I'm glad to be here; I'm glad to welcome the Eagle and her captain, Commander Welling, to Seattle. I appreciate all of you coming down for this event. I know Seafair Week is going to be a great success and we're all going to have a good time.

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