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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY  
DEPUTY SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION ELAINE L. CHAO  
U.S. COAST GUARD 200TH ANNIVERSARY BALL  
WASHINGTON, D.C.  
AUGUST 18, 1990

Good evening -- and what a great evening it is for the Coast Guard. And thank you, Admiral Kime, for that warm and generous introduction. I am the one who is honored to be here to celebrate 200 years of outstanding Coast Guard service to America.

And "outstanding" is the only word for it.

In 1790, Alexander Hamilton perhaps said it best when he urged the new Coast Guard, then called the "Revenue Cutter Service," to demonstrate "activity, vigilance, firmness, prudence, moderation, and good temper."

Your mission has changed over the years, but these are still the very same qualities that characterize the men and women in today's Coast Guard.

I have good reason to know this is true. My contacts with you all -- whether regular, reserve, enlisted, or civilian auxiliary -- have been consistently impressive. In my experience, a "can do" attitude is the hallmark of the Coast Guard, and is fundamentally responsible for your high level of mission performance and

effectiveness. You are truly a national asset -- and we need you more than ever.

The events of the past two weeks have shown again that the more things change, the more they stay the same. In the midst of incredible and heartening progress toward freedom and democracy around the world, immense challenges to peace and security can arise quickly and from unexpected quarters.

The Coast Guard, as always, plays a vital role in national defense. You have participated in all of the nation's wars since 1790, including 30 campaigns utilizing well over 2,000 ships and more than 200 aircraft.

Today, the Coast Guard is not only making invaluable contributions to defense preparedness through military sealift capability and the security of U.S. ports, but facing unprecedented challenges to preserve the environment, protect life and property at sea, and fight the war on drugs. Not a light workload, by any means.

These are the challenges that particularly face Admiral Kime. As you start your third century of service, the Coast Guard is fortunate to have an outstanding new Commandant. You might say, it's a new day and a new way.

I have every confidence that under his leadership the Coast Guard will meet the challenges of the coming years. Admiral, I look forward to working with you, and pledge my support in your effort to maintain the tradition of top quality service to the American public.

Tonight we are gathered to pay our respects to this tradition, and express our high hopes for the future. In that sense, the Coast Guard Bicentennial is not so much the end of 200 years of service, but merely a milestone in your continuing commitment as a diverse, responsible arm of our national defense.

You put this commitment into action every day. You reaffirm my fundamental conviction that people can convert their belief in the ideals of this nation into public service that make all the difference.

Good luck, God bless you, and enjoy this magnificent evening.