

For immediate release
Tuesday, June 24, 1975

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary to Mrs. Ford

Susan Ford will christen the official flagship for Operation Sail 1976 in St. Petersburg, Fla., Friday, June 27 at 11 a.m. Operation Sail 1976 is one of the major Bicentennial projects and involves more than 50 ships from 23 countries.

Ceremonies will take place near the Bounty Exhibit on the Municipal Pier in St. Petersburg. Susan will christen a Morgan 41-foot out island sailing yacht to be named OPSAIL '76 and later take the helm of the yacht into the Tampa Bay.

Among dignitaries present for the ceremonies: Rep. C.W. "Bill" Young, Eighth Congressional District of Florida; John Warner, administrator of the American Revolution Bicentennial Administration; Hon. Charles R. Schuh, mayor of St. Petersburg; Capt. Walter E. B. Godsall, assistant naval attache at the Embassy of Great Britain; and Operation Sail executives Henry Geyelin, vice chairman, and Leon A. Schertler, director of national programs.

Operation Sail 1976 will consist of an armada of more than 50 17th and 18th century ships from other countries who will tour East and West Coast ports during the Bicentennial year. The purpose of the fleet is to salute the United States in its 200th year and to emphasize the training of youth in sailing procedures. Each ship will be manned by youth 15-25 years old.

Operation Sail 1976 is a non-government, non-profit group headed by Emil Mosbacher Jr., former US Chief of Protocol and twice the successful defender of the America's Cup. The Operation Sail organization is composed of volunteers who are well-known yachtsmen, retired Navy and Coast Guard personnel, maritime industry officials and others interested in sailing. Great Britain is playing a major role in inviting and organizing other countries to participate.

#

press contact: Jim O'Doherty (813) 822-1776
press credentialing closes Thursday, June 26 at noon.