

of Lights by coming together in prayer, giving thanks to God for His many blessings, exchanging gifts, and lighting the eight candles of the menorah, one candle for each night that the sacred oil burned.

Steeped in ritual and rich in meaning, Hanukkah imparts profound lessons to us: that faith in God can sustain us through any adversity; that peace ultimately comes to those who persevere; and that, just as the shammas passes

its light to each candle in the menorah, so too must we share our hope and faith and joy with one another. In this way, we can ensure that the light kindled on that first Hanukkah so many centuries ago will continue to burn brightly for the generations to come.

Hillary and I extend best wishes to all for a wonderful holiday celebration.

BILL CLINTON

Remarks on Lighting the National Christmas Tree *December 5, 1996*

Thank you very much, Chairman Betchkal, Reverend Smith, my friend Patti LaBelle—you did well with and without your singers. [*Laughter*] To the Richmond College Children's Concert Choir and LeAnn Rimes, welcome, to the Mannheim Steamroller band, the Washington Ballet, the Boy and Girl Scouts. Let me join Santa Claus in also saying that we miss two important members the Pageant of Peace lost in the last year, Joe Reilly and Bill Harris. The spirit of Christmas was alive in them every day, and we remember them.

Hillary and I look forward to being here every year. I told Hillary when we were sitting here that I never quite get into the spirit of Christmas until I come here to the Pageant of Peace.

America's Christmas tree is famous all over the world. Believe it or not, there's even a new movie in Japan about two people who came to Washington and fell in love under this Christmas tree. It isn't hard to see how that would happen, for this is a magic time.

We come here tonight to celebrate that magic, to rejoice in the spirit of the holiday season, no matter what our faith, a spirit of sharing and giving, of gathering with family and friends and coming together as one community. You can see it everywhere at this time of year.

And of course, at Christmas we come together especially to celebrate the birth of a child who came into the world without a home, only a stable's roof to shelter him, who grew to teach the lesson of love and peace that has truly changed the world. "Blessed are the peacemakers," he said, and those words still call us to action.

As we look around the world tonight, we know the spirit of peace is strong enough to triumph over the forces that still threaten it. Let us be grateful that our Nation is at peace and rejoice in the progress we have made to bring about peace on Earth. And let us not forget the work still to be done, from Bosnia to the Middle East to the Korean Peninsula.

Today our brave men and women in uniform are helping other people in other lands to make their peace. And across our country this holiday season people are joining in peace to feed the hungry, to bring toys to poor children who otherwise would not have them, and to reconcile our own differences. At Christmas and throughout the year the greatest gift of all we can give our own children is to make their world more safe, more peaceful, and more possible for them to make the most of their God-given potential. It is for our children that we must dedicate ourselves to making peace wherever we can, around the world, in every community, in our own homes, and perhaps most important, in our own hearts.

So as we light this wonderful tree, let us remember to let our own light shine all year long, to make the future of our children bright, to honor the spirit of peace at Christmas time.

Merry Christmas, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:55 p.m. on the Ellipse during the annual Christmas Pageant of Peace. In his remarks, he referred to John J. Betchkal, president, Christmas Pageant of Peace; Rev. Perry Smith, pastor, First Baptist Church of Brentwood, MD; entertainers Patti LaBelle and

LeAnn Rimes; television weatherman Willard Scott, who played Santa Claus; and Joe Reilly and

Bill Harris, former presidents, Christmas Pageant of Peace.

Remarks on Presenting the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Awards December 6, 1996

Thank you very much. Secretary Kantor; Mrs. Baldrige; Senator Pressler; Congresswoman Slaughter; Congressman Ramstad; my good friend Earnie Deavenport; Mary Good—let me thank all of you. And let me say a special word of thanks to Arati Prabhakar, the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology, for the work that she has done in this Baldrige process. Thank you, ma'am. And Senator Pressler, as you leave the United States Senate after a distinguished career, let me thank you especially for the work you did to pass the telecommunications law, which will help America immeasurably and create hundreds of thousands of these kinds of good jobs in the years ahead. Thank you, sir.

I'd also like to thank the Army Band for doing such a good job here today. Thank you very much.

You know, when they were playing the national anthem, which normally I sing out of tune at the top of my lungs, but my voice has been a little constrained lately—my approval is at an all-time high when I'm hoarse and can't speak. [Laughter] I couldn't help thinking, as I was listening to the national anthem, what America was like when Francis Scott Key wrote that anthem and what he would think about what we have just seen today, how proud it would make the people who fought to start this country and who worked to hold it together to see what we have become after 200 years. And for all of you, I thank you.

I was listening to all the speakers here, and I was put in mind of the first public speech I ever gave as an elected official. Almost 20 years ago now, I was elected attorney general of my home State, and I was invited to the Rotary Club officers installation banquet in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, in January of 1977. The banquet started at 6:30. I was introduced to speak at 10 minutes to 10. [Laughter] There were about 500 people there, and all of them but 3 got to talk, and they went home mad. [Laughter]

But it was a wonderful night. There was entertainment from the local school groups, and you know, everybody got to talk. It was like it should have been: It was a community event; a lot of people talked. And then this fellow got up to introduce me. And I was nervous as a cat—my first speech as an elected official. And the first words out of his mouth—just how I feel after hearing them speak—he said, "You know, we could stop here and have had a very nice evening." [Laughter] I know he didn't mean it that way. [Laughter] But we could stop right here and have had a wonderful, wonderful ceremony.

This is the 3d year I've had the privilege of honoring the Baldrige Quality Award winners, and every year I feel more strongly that this is the way America ought to work. This is the way all of our organizations ought to work. This is the way our families should work, the way our charities should work, the way our religious institutions should work, the way our colleges and universities should work, the way our schools should work, and the way our Government should work.

Recognizing companies that have proved that excellence and good citizenship are compatible, that understand that business endeavors, like life, are much more a journey than a destination—it's a very, very special thing for me. And I hope that my presence here helps to get all of you the recognition you deserve around the country, and hope that it will inspire more and more business people and more and more people in every organized form of human endeavor in our Nation to follow your lead.

This is an especially meaningful day for me today also because I used to do this with Secretary Kantor's predecessor, Ron Brown, and last March we had a ceremony like this at the White House, which was one of the last official duties Ron Brown performed before his untimely death on his mission to the Balkans. Let