

of our loved ones, but also in the faces of those who, like Jesus, are familiar with poverty, hardship, and rejection. And let us be inspired by His example to serve one another with generous hearts and open hands. In this way we will approach the dawn of a new century and a new millennium confident in God's abundant grace

and strengthened by His timeless promise of salvation.

Hillary joins me in praying that the peace and joy of this holiday season will remain with you throughout the coming year. Merry Christmas, and God bless you.

BILL CLINTON

Message on the Observance of Kwanzaa, 1996 *December 11, 1996*

Warm greetings to everyone celebrating Kwanzaa.

The hearts of millions of men and women across America and around the world rejoice as together we enter into the spirit of this uplifting holiday. The seven principles of Kwanzaa—unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith—teach us that when we come together to strengthen our families and communities and honor the lessons of the past, we can face the future with joy and optimism. Through prayer, song, and the exchange of gifts, Kwanzaa helps us celebrate the human experience and appreciate our many blessings.

Today, we have a renewed sense of hope in America, a hope based on the idea that our great diversity can unite—not divide—our society. As we rejoice in the rich cultural heritage of the African American community during Kwanzaa, let us work together to ensure that the meaning and energy of this inspiring festival will remain with us throughout the coming year, bringing courage, renewal, and even greater hope for the future.

Hillary joins me in sending best wishes for a wonderful holiday and every happiness in the year ahead.

BILL CLINTON

Remarks on the Airline Safety Initiative and an Exchange With Reporters *December 12, 1996*

The President. Thank you. Good morning. I will be very brief, but I do want to make a couple of remarks. I want to thank the Vice President, first of all, and the people who have worked with him for their unflagging efforts to improve airline safety. I want to thank Secretary Pena and Mr. Hall and Ms. Daschle and the other members of the administration who have worked on this.

I want to especially thank the airline executives who are here for announcing their plan to ensure that their U.S. carriers have smoke detectors in their cargo holds whenever they leave the ground. This is further proof of what we can achieve when we work together.

This is a critical part of our long-range plan to make Americans more secure and to make

sure our skies are safer. After the TWA disaster, the Vice President's commission worked around the clock to develop an action plan for aviation safety. Just a month later, we made nearly every one of their recommendations the law of the land: state-of-the-art bomb detectors in our major airports, a dramatic increase in FBI agents assigned to counterterrorism efforts, background checks and FBI fingerprint checks for airport and airline employees, improved mail and cargo inspection, and more bomb-sniffing dogs.

I said in October that we cannot make the world risk-free, but we can reduce the risks we face. By putting smoke detectors in every cargo hold of these carriers, we take another step to make our people and our skies safer.