

Statement on the Death of Lawton Chiles *December 12, 1998*

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to learn of the death of Governor Lawton Chiles. Lawton Chiles was a close friend of mine for many years. He served the people of Florida as an elected official for over 40 years, always putting the interests of ordinary people first with his unique political style. As a leader, he has been an indefatigable champion of Florida's children and families and a steadfast protector of the environment. He displayed courage time and time again, most recently challenging the Na-

tion's top cigarette makers and emerging victorious.

Lawton was a statesman, a role model, and one of the most successful and respected public officials in the later half of the 20th century. He set a benchmark for how public servants will be judged and, I believe, created a legacy that will endure for generations.

Lawton never forgot the thousands of ordinary citizens he met as he walked the highways and backroads of his State, whom he served so well. And they will never forget him.

Remarks at the Arrival Ceremony in Tel Aviv, Israel *December 13, 1998*

President and Mrs. Weizman, Prime Minister and Mrs. Netanyahu, first of all, on behalf of my family and our entire delegation, I would like to thank you for coming out here at this very late hour to welcome us. Hillary and Chelsea and I and all the Americans have been looking forward to this trip. I am delighted to be back in Israel.

As President Weizman said, this is the fourth time I have come here as President, to reaffirm America's unbreakable ties to Israel, to reaffirm our unshakable commitment to Israel's security, and this time, to fulfill the pledge I made at the Wye talks to speak with the people of Israel and the Palestinians about the benefits of peace and to stand by you as you take risks for a just, lasting, and secure peace. The United States will walk this road with Israel every step of the way.

Peacemaking has opened historic opportunities to Israel, but each step forward has been tempered with pain and understandable feelings of ambivalence when questions arise as to whether agreements are being implemented fully.

We share the conviction that without security, the peace process always will be clouded for the vast majority of Israelis who seek only to live normal lives as a free people in their own country, and we are determined that Israel's just

requirements for security be met. At the same time, we believe that, for two peoples who are fated to share this land, peace is not simply an option among many but the only choice that can avert still more years of bloodshed, apprehension, and sorrow.

That is why I am here. In the past few weeks, the people of Israel, through their Government and Knesset, have endorsed the Wye River agreement, recognizing the promise it holds for putting the peace process on track and creating a positive environment for dealing with the complex and difficult final status talks.

I want to again, but for the first time in Israel, pay tribute to the Prime Minister and the representatives of his government for those long, arduous, difficult talks at Wye, often accompanied with sleepless nights. I believe it was the right thing to do. I believed it then. I believe it now. But both sides now must face the challenge of implementing Wye.

I will discuss that with the Prime Minister and his colleagues tomorrow and later in my meeting with Chairman Arafat. Then on Tuesday our family will have the chance to go to Bethlehem and Masada to explore more of this magnificent country and its sacred heritage.

Again, I thank you for welcoming us. I thank you for the struggles you have waged for freedom and for security. I thank you for the efforts you now make for peace. It is good to be back.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12 midnight at Ben-Gurion International Airport. In his remarks, he referred to President Ezer Weizman of Israel and his wife, Reuma; Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel and his wife, Sarah; and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel in Jerusalem *December 13, 1998*

Prime Minister Netanyahu. Mr. President, I want to welcome you and your entire delegation, the Secretary of State, the National Security Adviser, and your exceptional team, for coming here on this mission of peace and for your understanding of our concerns. We spent many hours in Wye River, and there and in our conversations this morning, I've come to appreciate and admire your extraordinary ability to empathize and the seriousness with which you examine every issue.

Your visit here is part of the implementation of the Wye River accords. Now, this was not an easy agreement for us, but we did our part. And we are prepared to do our part based on Palestinian compliance. When I say that we did our part, you know that within 2 weeks we withdrew from territory, released prisoners, and opened the Gaza airport, precisely as we undertook to do.

The Palestinians, in turn, were to live up to a series of obligations in the sphere of security, in ending incitement and violence, in the repeal of the Palestinian Charter, and in commitments to negotiate a final settlement in order to achieve permanent peace between us. I regret to say that none of these conditions have been met.

Palestinians proceeded to unilaterally declare what the final settlement would be. Coming out of Wye, they said again and again that regardless of what happens in the negotiations, on May 4th of 1999 they will unilaterally declare a state, divide Jerusalem, and make its eastern half the Palestinian capital. This is a gross violation of the Oslo and Wye accords, which commit the parties to negotiate a mutually agreed final settlement.

Mr. Arafat and the Palestinian Authority must officially and unequivocally renounce this attempt. I think no one can seriously expect Israel to hand over another inch of territory unless and until such an unambiguous correction is made.

I said that there are other violations. The Palestinians, I'm afraid, began a campaign of incitement. At Wye, as those who are here well know, we agreed to release Palestinian prisoners, but not terrorists with blood on their hands or members of Hamas who are waging war against us. No sooner did we release the agreed number of prisoners in the first installment that the Palestinian Authority refused to acknowledge what they agreed to at Wye. Falsely charging Israel with violating the prisoner release clause, Palestinian leaders openly incited for violence and riots, which culminated in a savage near-lynching of an Israeli soldier. And the Palestinian Authority organized other violent demonstrations. Therefore, the Palestinian Authority must stop incitement and violence at once, and they must do so fully and permanently.

There has also been some downgrading on parts of the security cooperation between us, and the Palestinian Authority must restore this cooperation again, fully and permanently. They must live up to their other obligations in the Wye agreement in the fields of weapons collections, illegal weapons collections, reducing the size of their armed forces, and the like.

Now, I stress that none of these are new conditions. All are integral parts of the Wye and Oslo agreements to which we are committed. We hope that tomorrow the Palestinian Authority will once and for all live up to at least one of their obligations. And if the PNC