

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.