

Remarks at a Hanukkah Menorah Lighting Ceremony in Jerusalem *December 13, 1998*

Thank you very much, Mr. President and Mrs. Weizman. Let me say a special word of welcome in greetings on behalf of Hillary and myself to all the children who are here, and my thanks to these wonderful voices we have just heard sing. And I congratulate this young man for holding the candle all that time and not burning himself. Congratulations! *[Laughter]*

It is our great honor, all of the American delegation here, the members of our administration and the Members of Congress, to celebrate the first day of Hanukkah with the President and some of Israel's finest young people. This is a joyous time of year for Jewish people everywhere, here in Israel, in America, around the world, a moment to cherish your extraordinary past, to strive for a future worthy of your history.

On this occasion, you celebrate not simply a long week of happiness but thousands of years of triumph over adversity. You thank God not only for miracles but for hard-earned achievement. May this menorah bring light through wisdom and illumination. May it bring warmth through faith and fellowship. May it kindle a

divine spark of peace touching all the peoples and places of the Holy Land. May it bring hope that after 50 years of building, security finally will come to all the people of Israel. And may it bring more than hope; may it ignite in each of you the will and strength to bring these hopes to reality.

All of you in this way can serve as candles full of light. Let our descendants look back at Israel at the turn of this new century and say the words that every Jewish child knows from the letters on the dreidel: A great miracle happened here.

Happy Hanukkah.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 5:20 p.m. in the Foyer of Beit Hannassi, the residence of President Ezer Weizman of Israel. In his remarks, he referred to President Weizman's wife, Reuma; and Moshe Metbabo, who lit the first candle in the menorah. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Weizman.

Statement on Crime Rates *December 13, 1998*

The preliminary crime data released by the FBI today confirm that crime rates in America are continuing to decline for the seventh straight year. During the first 6 months of 1998, serious crime fell by another 5 percent—with large reductions in murder and other violent crimes leading the way. If these trends hold for the remainder of the year, the number of murders will have been cut by nearly one-third since Vice President Gore and I took office. This is remarkable progress, and it shows that our strategy of more police, tougher gun laws, and better

crime prevention is making a difference. But our work is far from done. In the coming year, as we finish the job of putting 100,000 more police on the streets, we must continue to do everything we can to make all of our communities safer.

NOTE: This statement was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 12 but was embargoed for release until 6 p.m. on December 13.