

July 18 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

the coast of Martha's Vineyard, MA, to locate the aircraft that carried Mr. Kennedy, his wife, and her sister, who were reported missing on July 17.

Statement on Crime Rate Statistics

July 18, 1999

Today's Justice Department statistics confirm that our strategy of more police on the street and fewer guns in the hands of criminals is working. Violent crime has now dropped by 27 percent since 1993, and overall crime has fallen to an unprecedented low. We should stick to this commonsense strategy.

Unfortunately, some in Congress are willing to play politics with our public safety and threaten all of our progress. They want to shut down

our successful community policing efforts and riddle our gun laws with dangerous new loopholes. To keep driving down the crime rates, Congress should support more police on the street and fewer guns, not more guns on the street and fewer police.

NOTE: This statement was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 16 but was embargoed for release until 4:30 p.m., July 18.

Remarks at a Dinner for Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel

July 18, 1999

I want to, first of all, welcome you all and thank you for braving the rather lengthy receiving line. Prime Minister Barak has asked me to announce that you can relax, because our speeches will only be half as long as the receiving line. *[Laughter]*

It's a great pleasure and an honor for Hillary and I to welcome the Baraks to the White House. This is a good day. This is a good day for affirming the eternal friendship between Israel and the United States. It is also a hard day for those of us who are Americans, and we offer our prayers for John Kennedy, Carolyn Bessette, and Lauren Bessette and for their families. We are reminded again that life and its possibilities are fleeting, that we mortals are obliged to be humble and grateful for every day, and to make the most of every day, and that the obligation we bear for the search for peace in the Middle East should be assumed with that clear knowledge.

Mr. Prime Minister, 12 days ago you spoke to the *Knesset*, announcing your new government. Now, I read your speech with great interest, particularly your vow that you will, quote, "not sleep a wink" until peace is achieved.

Shortly after you gave that speech you came here; we went to Camp David; you kept me up until 1:45 in the morning. *[Laughter]* This is a man who keeps his commitments. *[Laughter]*

In that speech, you proclaimed that this moment is, quote, "a landmark and a turning point, a time of reconciliation, a time of unity, a time of peace." Many years of hard work have brought this day closer—some of it done on this very ground. Here Prime Minister Begin and President Sadat, with President Carter's assistance, made peace. Here Prime Minister Rabin, Chairman Arafat, and King Hussein committed to peace. Here last year, Prime Minister Netanyahu and Chairman Arafat agreed to build on that commitment.

Now the challenge is to make the promise of those days a reality every day from now on, to implement the Wye accords, to reach a permanent status agreement between Israel and the Palestinian people, to build a comprehensive peace for the region, including Syria and Lebanon. Mr. Prime Minister, you have made it very clear that Israel will keep its commitments. I want to make it equally clear that America

will do its part. And that should include the approval by our Congress of the commitments we made at Wye to help the parties promote the peace process.

Mr. Prime Minister, I know you are more than ready for the challenge ahead. Americans know you as a great war hero. They may not know you as a classical pianist, a systems analyst, a tinkerer who can take apart and repair any clock, and, I am told, pick any lock. [Laughter] I don't know what you're thinking about for a career change, but—[laughter].

They may not know about your parents' path to Israel, how your father saw his parents killed by Cossacks in Lithuania, while your mother's parents perished in the Holocaust. The qualities you have and the experiences you have known have shaped a leader of extraordinary breadth and depth. A leader who is a decorated warrior but, who, like another decorated warrior, Yitzhak Rabin, has the courage to make peace, the humanity to treat old adversaries with dignity and fairness, the wisdom to know that the land which brought forth the world's great religions, who share a belief in one loving creator, God,

that cares for us all, surely that region can be a land of milk and honey for all who call it home.

President Theodore Roosevelt, also a warrior turned peacemaker, said when he received the Nobel Peace Prize, "Words count only when they give expression to deeds." Much of the hard work of turning words to deeds remains to be done. I am grateful that the people of Israel have called upon you for your greatest command: to bring to life the cherished dream of *shalom, salaam, peace*.

Please join me in a toast to Prime Minister Barak, to Nava, to all of the friends of peace here, especially to you, Leah Rabin, and to the people of Israel.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:20 p.m. in the South Lawn Pavilion at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Barak's wife, Nava; and Leah Rabin, widow of slain Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Prime Minister Barak.

Remarks to the 1999 Women's World Cup Champion United States Soccer Team

July 19, 1999

The President. Good morning. Please be seated. Hillary and Al and Tipper and I are delighted to welcome all of you here, the members of the team, the Members of Congress, who are here. We want to welcome Marla Messing, the president of the Women's World Cup; Donna de Varona, the chairman of the Women's World Cup Organizing Committee. Thank you and—yes, give them a hand. [Applause] And we want to welcome this remarkable team. They are all here, but two, today; that's an amazing turnout. Give them a hand. [Applause]

We all know this is both a moment of celebration and a moment of sadness for the United States, and our thoughts and prayers are with the families of John Kennedy and Carolyn and Lauren Bessette. It is at times like this that we really stop to recognize that, as big and diverse as our country is, we can come together as a national family. We can come together in

sorrow or in joy if it reflects the values that we honor most.

This is one of those moments. The Women's World Cup champions, here at the White House, brought America to its feet, had us screaming our lungs out with pride and joy. They also didn't spare us the suspense. [Laughter] But their triumph has surely become America's triumph. We are all proud them, and we are thrilled to have them here at the White House today.

As someone who got to watch the game at the Rose Bowl, who sat so far on the edge of my seat I actually almost fell out of the skybox, I can't help recalling just a few moments of that game. Kristine Lilly heading away what would have been a game-winning goal for the other side, in overtime. She's not here, but I have to mention Michelle Akers charging up