

Statement on Signing the Digital Theft Deterrence and Copyright Damages Improvement Act of 1999
December 9, 1999

Today I have signed into law H.R. 3456, the "Digital Theft Deterrence and Copyright Damages Improvement Act of 1999." This legislation will increase for the first time since January 1988 the statutory damages that a copyright holder may recover for certain copyright infringements. This increase in penalties would be an effective deterrent to would-be pirates of copyrighted works. This Act also directs the United States Sentencing Commission to issue sentencing guidelines to ensure that sentences for criminal offenses against intellectual property are sufficiently severe to deter such offenses.

I fully support efforts to make sentences in criminal cases involving intellectual property offenses true deterrents against the commission of those offenses and am pleased that H.R. 3456 will require the Sentencing Commission to address this matter on an expedited basis.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
December 9, 1999.

NOTE: H.R. 3456, approved December 9, was assigned Public Law No. 106-160.

Message on the Observance of Ramadan, 1999
December 9, 1999

Warm greetings to Muslims across America and around the world as you celebrate the start of Ramadan, a holy month of prayer, fasting, reflection, and good works.

Islam is one of the world's most prominent religions and a source of profound strength and guidance for millions of Americans. Members of the Muslim American community have made enormous contributions to our national life. I am especially pleased that my alma mater, Georgetown University, has named its first Muslim chaplain, reflecting the increasing recognition in our country of the Islamic faith and our firm commitment to religious tolerance.

Sadly, in too many communities around the world, Muslims and other believers are unable to worship according to their religious traditions. We look forward to the day when people of all faiths can freely express their beliefs without fear of persecution or discrimination.

Each year, Ramadan brings a promise of renewal and hope for the world. I pray that, as the new moon rises, we will witness the beginning of a new era of tolerance around the globe. As the followers of Islam celebrate the revelation of God's word to Muhammad, we join you in honoring his call for harmony and peace.

BILL CLINTON

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner
December 9, 1999

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. It's been a long but a wonderful night. I am delighted to see you all. The most important thing I can say is, thank you. I thank Joe Andrew for his increasingly energetic leadership. [Laughter]

I thank Ed Rendell. For those of you who don't know him, you will get to know him. Philadelphia had lost jobs for 30 years before Ed Rendell became mayor, and now they're gaining jobs rapidly. They had lost population; they had had a crime rate going up—everything. Do you