

**Memorandum on Suspension of
Limitations Under the Jerusalem
Embassy Act**

December 17, 1999

Presidential Determination No. 00-08

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Suspension of Limitations Under the
Jerusalem Embassy Act

Pursuant to the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including section 7(a) of the Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-45) (the "Act"), I hereby determine that it is necessary to protect the national security interests of the United States to suspend for a period of 6 months the limitations set forth in section 3(b) and 7(b) of the Act.

You are hereby authorized and directed to transmit this determination to the Congress, accompanied by a report in accordance with section 7(a) of the Act, and to publish the determination in the *Federal Register*.

This suspension shall take effect after transmission of this determination and report to the Congress.

William J. Clinton

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 18.

The President's Radio Address

December 18, 1999

Good morning. The holiday season is a time when America's remarkable religious diversity shines brightest in so many homes and different places of worship and schools. Today I want to talk to you about the role of faith in our lives, in all of our religious diversity, and, particularly, in the education of our children.

America's founders were men and women of faith, many of whom fled oppression overseas to find freedom on our shores. They believed the best way to protect religious liberty was to guarantee, first of all, the right to practice religion by the dictates of their own conscience; and second, to forbid our Govern-

ment from imposing or establishing any religious belief. In their wisdom, they enshrined these two principles in our Constitution.

But, of course, reconciling these principles has not always been easy, especially when it comes to our education system. Finding the proper place for faith in our schools is a complex and emotional matter for many Americans. But I have never believed the Constitution required our schools to be religion-free zones or that our children must check their faiths at the schoolhouse door.

Americans expect our schools to teach our children the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in life. We also trust our schools to strengthen the moral foundation of our society, to reinforce the values taught at home and in our communities.

Studies show that children involved in religious activities are less likely to use drugs. Experience tells us they're more likely to stay out of trouble. Common sense says that faith and faith-based organizations from all religious backgrounds can play an important role in helping children to reach their fullest potential. That's why I've always supported individual students' rights to voluntarily practice religious beliefs, including prayer in school or to engage in religious activities on school grounds, but not to have any kind of enforced such activities.

Now, in 1995 our administration released a set of principles for protecting religious freedom in our public schools. We did so in response to parents and educators who asked for help in knowing what kinds of religious activities are permissible in public schools and what is not permissible. They asked for help in respecting the rights and beliefs of all students, from the most observant from all religious backgrounds to those who choose freely, as is their right, to completely abstain from any religious activity.

Those guidelines we issued make it clear that students do have the right to pray privately and individually in school, the right to say grace at lunch, the right to meet in religious groups on school grounds and to use school facilities just like any other groups do. They have the right to read the Bible or other religious books during study hall or free class time and the right to be free from coercion to participate in religious activity of any kind.