

resolved to take new steps in our battle against cancer, one of mankind's oldest foes.

First, we will guarantee the option of annual mammograms for every woman over 40 and, by waiving the deductible, we'll make annual breast cancer screenings more affordable. Right now, nearly half of older women do not get regular mammograms. By making mammograms more accessible and detecting cancer earlier, we can significantly increase the likelihood of successful treatment for this disease. Hillary has conducted a longstanding campaign to encourage older women to get these crucial tests, and these new changes will bring us closer to success in those efforts.

Second, we're expanding coverage for the early detection of cervical cancer. We have sophisticated tests to pick up early signs of cervical cancer, and from now on, Medicare will pay for regular access to this lifesaving technology.

And third, for the first time we'll now cover regular examinations for colon/rectal cancer.

Most Americans don't receive this important preventive test, but when we catch this cancer early, we can beat it more than 90 percent of the time.

Nearly every American family has been touched by the shadow of cancer. My own mother passed away just about 4 years ago from cancer, and especially at this time of year, I miss her a lot. So many other families have the same story. That's why these actions are so important. By detecting cancer early on, we offer our loved ones one of the greatest gifts of all, the gifts of life, health, and many holidays to come.

Thanks for listening. Happy holidays, and have a happy and healthy New Year.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 5:16 p.m. on December 24 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on December 27.

Statement on the Health Care Task Force Civil Case *December 29, 1997*

While the Department of Justice is still reviewing whether to appeal Judge Lamberth's ruling, I am quite confident that Mr. Magaziner acted appropriately. Any suggestion to the contrary is unfair and unsupported by the facts and the findings of the U.S. Attorney's Office in its 1995 investigation of this matter.

The U.S. Attorney's Office concluded that "there is no basis to conclude that Mr. Mag-

aziner committed a criminal offense in this matter. There is no significant evidence that his declaration was factually false, much less that it was willfully and intentionally so."

Mr. Magaziner is, and will remain, a valued member of my administration.

NOTE: In the statement, the President referred to U.S. District Judge Royce C. Lamberth.

Statement on Vandalism of the Islamic Star and Crescent Display on the Ellipse *December 29, 1997*

I strongly condemn the vandalism of the Islamic star and crescent displayed on the Ellipse in front of the White House. This year for the first time, an Islamic symbol was displayed along with the national Christmas tree and the menorah. The desecration of that symbol is the em-

bodiment of intolerance that strikes at the heart of what it means to be an American.

It is especially hurtful that such an act would occur at a time when so many communities are

coming together to celebrate their respective religions. The holiday season holds special meaning for us in America, where freedom of religion is one of the cornerstones of our democracy.

This administration will continue to fight against such acts of desecration and hate crimes that tear at the fabric of community life in America. Desecration of a religious symbol motivated by prejudice and hatred hurts us all.

Statement on the Presidential Legal Expense Trust

December 30, 1997

Hillary and I want to thank the thousands of people who contributed so generously to the Presidential Legal Expense Trust. We also want to thank Michael Cardozo, the executive director of the Trust, the cochairs, Father Theodore Hesburgh and Nicholas Katzenbach, and the other trustees, John Brademas, Ronald Olson, Elliot Richardson, Michael Sovern, John Whitehead, and Barbara Jordan, who served until her

death in 1996. Hillary and I are immensely grateful for their assistance.

In light of the trustees' decision to dissolve the Trust, we have asked the Counsel's office to advise us concerning the ethical and legal requirements that would govern any future efforts to address both the substantial legal fees already accumulated and those that will be generated by the need for ongoing representation.

Message on the Observance of Ramadan

December 30, 1997

Warm greetings to everyone observing the holy month of Ramadan.

For millions of Muslims across our nation and around the world, Ramadan marks the time when God revealed the Holy Quran to the Prophet Muhammad. During this sacred month, the ninth in the Islamic lunar calendar, devout Muslims concentrate on their faith, study the Quran, and discipline themselves through fasting between dawn and dusk. They seek to answer Islam's call to a life of piety, justice, and peace and to draw closer to God and to one another through many hours spent in prayer and contemplation.

Ramadan is a powerful reminder to all of us that the true riches of life are found, not

in material goods, but rather in the gifts of the spirit: the ever-present guidance and bountiful mercy of God, the love of family and friends, and the freedom to worship according to one's own conscience and convictions.

As the crescent moon once again heralds the coming of this season of faith and spiritual renewal, Hillary and I extend best wishes for a memorable observance.

BILL CLINTON

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 31.