

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.