

in the coming months of Ramadan, they evoke a call to community.

We light this tree in Washington, but all over the world we thank God that the light of peace is glowing as never before, in Northern Ireland, in Bosnia, in the Middle East. In the coming year, let us rededicate ourselves to building the bonds of peace on Earth. Let those of us who are Americans express our appreciation to those who serve us in uniform, represented tonight by the United States Air Force Band, who help to preserve peace for us.

Now I'd like to ask Sammy and Jessica and Edgar to come up here and join me as we light the Christmas tree, our national tree. Let the spirit of the holidays, of peace and good will, be our beacon all year long. Merry Christmas. Happy New Year. May God bless you all.

Now put your hands on the switch, and I'll count down to one. Three, two, one. Light the tree!

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:50 p.m. on the Ellipse during the annual Christmas Pageant of Peace. In his remarks, he referred to John J. Betchkal, president, Christmas Pageant of Peace; and baseball player Sammy Sosa, National League Most Valuable Player, and his wife, Sonia.

Message on the Observance of Hanukkah, 1998

December 9, 1998

Warm greetings to all those celebrating Hanukkah.

For eight consecutive nights during this twilight of the year, in Jewish homes across America and around the world, the flames of the menorah will once again brighten steadfast spirits and gladden faithful hearts. Commemorating the rededication of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem more than two millennia ago, Hanukkah is a joyous celebration of the victory of the righteous over oppression and a reaffirmation of religious freedom as a fundamental right of people everywhere. This Festival of Lights is a reminder to all of us of the many blessings that brighten our lives: the love of God, the gift of freedom, the strength of family and community, and the hope of lasting peace.

As millions of families gather to kindle the flames of the menorah and to recite the special prayers of Hanukkah, Hillary and I extend our best wishes for a memorable celebration and for happiness and peace in the coming year.

Bill Clinton

Memorandum on the Eleanor Roosevelt Award for Human Rights *December 9, 1998*

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: The Eleanor Roosevelt Award for Human Rights

This month we mark the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations General Assembly declaration affirming a universal standard of human rights and fundamental freedoms. In so doing, we also honor the legacy of Eleanor Roosevelt, who served as the first Chairperson of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and who was the driving force behind the Declaration.

To reaffirm our commitment to the principles of the Declaration and to honor the contributions of Eleanor Roosevelt, I hereby direct you to establish the Eleanor Roosevelt Award for Human Rights. You are authorized to take all necessary steps to establish an appropriate awards program under the auspices of your Department to recognize distinguished Americans who have made especially meritorious contributions to the promotion and protection of human rights within the United States or around the world.

These awards will be presented on or about December 10 of each year as part of the commemoration of the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Prior to November 15 of each year, you shall present to me a list of nominees from which I will select up to five individuals or groups of individuals to receive this award. In preparing your list of nominees, you may consider the recommendations of appropriate individuals and groups and coordinate your nominations in consultation with other Federal agencies as appropriate. You may include recommendations for posthumous awards.