

world with only a stable's roof to shelter Him; yet He grew to teach a lesson of love that continues to enrich our lives 2,000 years later.

That love is at the heart of Christmas. It is the love we give our children, who make our world radiant with joy and promise. It is the love of family and friends that inspires every gift and greeting we receive. It is the love that moves us to reject the prejudices that divide us. It is the love that calls us to ease the suffering of those touched by poverty, illness, injustice, or oppression. Above all, it is the love of God for each of us, revealed in the timeless gift of His Son.

Wherever Americans gather to celebrate the birth of Jesus, let us give thanks for the precious gift of love that graces our lives and lights our way toward a better future.

Hillary joins me in sending our warmest wishes for a memorable Christmas and a new year bright with the hope of joy and peace.

Bill Clinton

Message on the Observance of Kwanzaa, 1998

December 22, 1998

Warm greetings to everyone observing Kwanzaa.

In millions of homes across America and around the world, the holiday of Kwanzaa is both a solemn and a joyous occasion. It is a time to honor God and to reaffirm a commitment to the values of love, community, and responsibility. It is a celebration of the diverse cultures within the African diaspora and a time to give thanks for the blessings of family and friendship. It is also an opportunity to reflect on the lessons and legacy of the past so that we might build a better future.

The seven principles of Kwanzaa—unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith—echo many of the same ideals that inspired our country's founders and shaped our nation's character. Crossing lines of religion, culture, and background, these common values help us to forge stronger families and communities and compel us to achieve our highest goals.

As families across our nation gather to celebrate this festive holiday, Hillary and I extend warmest wishes for a joyous Kwanzaa and a new year of peace and happiness.

Bill Clinton

Remarks at a Housing and Urban Development Grant Announcement in Baltimore, Maryland

December 23, 1998

Thank you very much. Thank you. Well, if Christa Spangler hasn't put us in the spirit of the season, I don't know who could. Didn't she do a magnificent job? Thank you very much. *[Applause]* Thank you. Thank you, Secretary Cuomo, for your remarks and your remarkable work.

I want to say at this holiday season, the beginning of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, the season of Hanukkah for Jewish Americans, and Christmas for those of us who are Christians, when we are told we should count our blessings, one of the things that has been a great blessing for me in the last 6 years as President has been my proximity to and involvement with the city of Baltimore and the State of Maryland.

I have, as you heard Mayor Schmoke say, starting in 1992, I have visited the churches here; I have walked the streets here; I have seen the children here in their schools and their environmental projects and in other ways. I have loved this State. I have been to Annapolis and to Clinton, Maryland—*[laughter]*—and to Montgomery County—and Wayne—and to, obviously, so many times to Camp David and the environs there. And I feel very blessed.

But I was looking at your elected Representatives—Elijah Cummings, who is very well named; he sounds like a prophet about half the time. And I was thinking that there is no State in the country that has a pair of Senators with quite the combination of intelligence, compassion, and energy, and plain old pull that Maryland does. And I am so grateful for the work that Governor Glendening and Lieutenant Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend have done.

As all of you know, I've had also a special friendship with Mayor Schmoke, and I sort