

Message on the Observance of Ramadan *January 10, 1997*

Warm greetings to all those celebrating the sacred month of Ramadan.

Each year during Ramadan, Muslims across America and around the world commemorate God's revelation of the Koran to Muhammad with a month of rigorous fasting and devout prayer. This period of discipline for body, mind, and spirit draws the Muslim community closer not only to God, but also to their fellow human beings.

By experiencing hunger during Ramadan, the followers of Muhammad learn true compassion for the poor of the world who go hungry every day. By reflecting on God's teachings in the

Koran, they learn humility and the beauty of forgiveness. And, by their example of devotion and self-discipline during Ramadan, Muslims remind us all that our true strength is derived, not from food and drink, but from closeness to God.

As the crescent moon marks the beginning of Ramadan again this year, Hillary and I extend our best wishes for a holy and memorable observance.

BILL CLINTON

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 11.

The President's Radio Address *January 11, 1997*

Good morning. Today I want to talk about how to build upon the progress we've made together in working against crime and violence, and especially how we can fight against youth crime.

Four years ago it seemed to many Americans as if the forces of crime and violence had gained an intractable hold over our country, and law-abiding Americans were afraid that from now on they would just have to put up with the insecurity and loss that goes with rampant crime. I was determined to turn that around, to give people the tools they need to take back their streets and schools and neighborhoods, to reestablish a sense of security and true freedom in our country, and to restore our people's faith in the power of law and order.

We had a comprehensive plan to fight crime, to put 100,000 new community police officers on the street and tough new penalties on the books, to keep guns away from criminals by passing the Brady bill and banning assault weapons, to steer young people away from crime, gangs, and drugs in the first place. This approach is working.

This week the FBI reported that serious crime dropped another 3 percent last year, dropping for the 5th year in a row, the longest

decline in more than 25 years. This is great news, not because it gives us a chance to sit back and rest on our laurels but because it does show all of us that if we work together we can make a difference.

Now that we've finally turned the crime on the run, we have to redouble our efforts. We have to drive the forces of violence further and further into retreat. And as we move forward, we have to remember that we're not just fighting against crime; we're fighting for the kind of nation we want to build together for the 21st century, for an America where people feel safe when they walk around the block at night and untroubled when they kiss their children goodbye in the morning, an America where nobody's grandmother lives across the street from a crack house and nobody's child walks to school through a neighborhood overrun by gangs. We're fighting for our children and for their future.

As I begin my second term as President, the next stage in our fight must center on keeping our children safe and attacking the scourge of juvenile crime and gangs. I want every police officer, prosecutor, and citizen in America working together to keep our young people safe and young criminals off the streets. This should be