

raise our children in communities where they can thrive and grow.

Today, the task of fulfilling the promise of our civil rights laws, of keeping the American dream alive for all citizens is far from over. That is why I have nominated an eminently qualified person to lead this division into the 21st century. Bill Lann Lee has lived the American dream, and he has dedicated his life to making the dream come alive for all Americans. Bill Lann Lee deserves to be America's next Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights.

**Proclamation 7059—Human Rights Day, Bill of Rights Day, and Human Rights Week, 1997**

December 9, 1997

*By the President of the United States of America*

**A Proclamation**

Human rights are the cornerstone of American democracy. The founders of our democracy, in their wisdom, recognized the inherent dignity of every human being and enshrined in the Bill of Rights our profound commitment to freedom of speech, religion, and assembly and the right to due process and a fair trial. Through more than two centuries of challenge and change, these guiding principles have sustained us. They form the common ground on which our racial, religious, and ethnic diversity can flourish.

It is a measure of our greatness as a Nation that each new generation of Americans has sought to advance and extend the rights set forth by Thomas Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence and by the framers of our Constitution. Promoting human rights and democracy around the world is a central pillar of our foreign policy. We seek to protect and advance human rights for all, not only because a world that respects such rights will be freer, safer, and more prosperous, but also so that we may keep faith with the vision of our founders, who knew that these rights are the deepest reflection of America's fundamental values.

This week marks the beginning of the world's celebration of the 50th anniversary year of the Universal Declaration of Human

Rights. The adoption of this set of principles by the United Nations on December 10, 1948, was a landmark event in the course of modern human history. The Declaration represented a collective condemnation by nearly 50 U.N. member states of the widespread and devastating human rights abuses committed prior to and during World War II, and it reflected a consensus on what the postwar world should seek to become. Among the Declaration's 30 articles are affirmations of the right to life, liberty, and personal security; the right to freedom of thought, religion, and expression; and the right to freedom from slavery, torture, and arbitrary arrest and detention.

It was fitting that a great American, Eleanor Roosevelt, played a pivotal role in the development of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which so closely reflected the tenets of our own Bill of Rights. As Chair of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, she led the efforts of its 18 members to define basic rights and freedoms and to draft the international affirmation of rights that was ultimately adopted by the General Assembly. Today, thanks to those efforts, scores of countries across the globe have incorporated these fundamental principles into their laws and practices, and millions of people are leading freer, happier, and more fulfilling lives.

Now our challenge is to reaffirm the universality of these precepts and to ensure that all the world's peoples share in their protections. While we have made great progress in this endeavor, we must recognize that intolerance, discrimination, and persecution continue to darken our vision of a better future. Each of us has a part to play in upholding human rights for men and women of all political, ethnic, religious, and racial backgrounds. The words of Eleanor Roosevelt are both an inspiration and a challenge, not only to Americans, but also to citizens throughout the international community: "The destiny of human rights is in the hands of all of our citizens and all of our communities."

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim December 10,

OUR PRESIDENTS ARE MASTERS IN THE TECHNIQUE OF TWISTED LOGIC & REVERSING REALITY.

THESE ARE COMPLETELY  
INCOMPATIBLE

1997, as Human Rights Day; December 15, 1997, as Bill of Rights Day; and the week beginning December 10, 1997, as Human Rights Week. I call upon the people of the United States to celebrate these observances with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities that demonstrate our national commitment to the Bill of Rights, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the promotion of human rights for all people.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this ninth day of December, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., December 11, 1997]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on December 12.

### Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Burma

December 9, 1997

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I hereby report to the Congress on developments concerning the national emergency with respect to Burma that I declared in Executive Order 13047 of May 20, 1997, pursuant to section 570 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act (the "Act") and the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA). This report is submitted pursuant to section 204(c) of IEEPA, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c) and section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c). This report discusses only matters concerning the national emergency with respect to Burma that was declared in Executive Order 13047.

On May 20, 1997, I issued Executive Order 13047 (62 FR 28301, May 22, 1997), effective on May 21, 1997, to declare a national emergency with respect to Burma and to prohibit new investment in Burma by United States persons, except to the extent provided in regulations, orders, directives, or licenses that may be issued in conformity with section 570 of the Act. The order also

prohibits any approval or other facilitation by a United States person, wherever located, of a transaction by a foreign person where the transaction would constitute new investment in Burma prohibited by the order if engaged in by a United States person or within the United States. This action was taken in response to the large-scale repression of the democratic opposition by the Government of Burma since September 30, 1996. A copy of the order was provided to the Congress on May 20, 1997.

By its terms, nothing in Executive Order 13047 is to be construed to prohibit the entry into, performance of, or financing of a contract to sell or purchase goods, services, or technology, except: (1) where the entry into such contract on or after May 21, 1997, is for the general supervision and guarantee of another person's performance of a contract for the economic development of resources located in Burma; or (2) where such contract provides for payment, in whole or in part, in (i) shares of ownership, including an equity interest, in the economic development of resources located in Burma; or (ii) participation in royalties, earnings, or profits in the economic development of resources located in Burma.

The prohibitions of Executive Order 13047 apply to United States persons, defined to include U.S. citizens and permanent resident aliens wherever they are located, entities organized under U.S. law (including their foreign branches), and entities and individuals actually located in the United States. The sanctions do not apply directly to foreign subsidiaries of U.S. firms, although foreign firms' activities may be affected by the restriction on United States persons' facilitation of a foreign person's investment transactions in Burma.

The term "new investment" means any of the following activities, if such an activity is undertaken pursuant to an agreement, or pursuant to the exercise of rights under such an agreement, that is entered into with the Government of Burma, or a nongovernmental entity in Burma, on or after May 21, 1997: (a) The entry into a contract that includes the economic development of resources located in Burma; (b) the entry into

be further weakening and that the government has a serious shortage of foreign exchange reserves with which to pay for imports. While Burma's economic crisis is largely a result of the SLORC's own heavy-handed mismanagement, the SLORC is unlikely to find a way out of the crisis unless political developments permit an easing of international pressure. I shall continue to exercise the powers at my disposal to deal with these problems and will report periodically to the Congress on significant developments.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate.

### Remarks Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in New York City

December 9, 1997

Thank you very much, Gay, for your introduction and for your superlative work. Thank you, Ambassador Richardson, for your distinguished representation of our country and for the campaign speech you gave for Gay—[laughter]—proving that diplomacy and politics can never be fully separated and shouldn't be. Thank you, Mr. Morgenthau, for all you have done for the people of New York and for the contributions that you and your family have made, which are memorialized in this wonderful place. And I thank you and David Altshuler for the tour I had before we started tonight.

I'd like to thank the others who are here in our administration who have worked on areas of human rights: OAS Ambassador Victor Marrero; ECOSOC Ambassador Betty King; Ambassador Nancy Rubin, our representative to the U.N. Human Rights Commission. And I'd like to say a special word of thanks to John Shattuck, the Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, who has really worked hard for a very long time under enormously adverse circumstances—sometimes when his

President couldn't do everything he wanted him to do. Thank you, and God bless you.

I thank Congresswoman Nita Lowey for being here and for her alert leadership on so many issues. And we thank the President of the General Assembly and all the members of the diplomatic corps who are here as we launch the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

As human rights advocates, defenders, and educators, more than anyone else, the people in this room and those whom you represent give life to the words of the Universal Declaration. You shine the light of freedom on oppression, speak on behalf of the voiceless, spark the conscience of the world. Again I want to thank Gay for her tireless commitment to justice and equality. But I thank all of you for the work you do every day to make human rights a human reality.

The idea of a global declaration of rights emerged from the trauma of global war in which human rights were the first casualty. Here at the Museum of Jewish Heritage, we remember the evil of the Holocaust. But thanks to the marvelous conception of this unique place, we can also celebrate the strength of the human spirit, the will to endure and to preserve human dignity.

Under the wise, compassionate leadership of Eleanor Roosevelt, half a century ago 18 delegates from China to Lebanon, Chile to Ukraine forged the first international agreement on the rights of humankind. On December 10th, 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration without a single dissenting vote. I am very proud that the First Lady, who has traveled the world to advance human rights, especially for women and young girls, will take part in tomorrow's United Nations commemoration.

Over the past half-century, the declaration's 30 articles have formed a constellation of principles to which all people can aspire. They have entered the consciousness of people all around the world. They're now invoked routinely in constitutions and courts. They set a yardstick of humanity's best practices against which we must all now measure ourselves.

30  
articles

DEMOCRACY  
IS  
COMMUNISM!

But as Eleanor Roosevelt said, words on paper bring no guarantees, and I quote, "unless the people know them, unless the people understand them, unless the people demand that they be lived." Promoting respect for human rights is a fulfilling, but never fulfilled, obligation. Fifty years since the charter was forged, communism has been discredited, but threats to freedom and human rights still persist. Human rights are still at risk from Burma to Nigeria, from Belarus to China. Although more than half the world's people now live under governments of their own choosing, democracy's roots are still fragile in some countries. Others are besieged by forces ranging from drug cartels to organized crime. And even in democracies, human rights, which so often mean minority rights, are not guaranteed.

And while we celebrate the end of communism and the fact that it's enabled so many people to affirm their special differences, religious, ethnic, and cultural, we have also seen from Bosnia to Rwanda that old hatreds can become the newest human rights abuses. And let us remember in this museum that having a people who are well-educated and prosperous, even having a government that is popularly elected are not in themselves sufficient to guarantee human rights.

But let us also remember that being educated by Western standards and prosperous are not necessary conditions for human rights or for people who want them. Men and women from Cambodia to Romania, Argentina, South Africa, and Russia have shown that, regardless of the economic condition of a nation, freedom is not—contrary to what the critics of the declaration say—an American or a Western or a wealthy nation right; it is a human right and a universal aspiration.

Advancing human rights must always be a central pillar of America's foreign policy. Looking back over the last 5 years, we see notable achievements; we also see missed opportunities. And looking ahead, we see an enormous amount of work still to be done.

I am proud that we stood down a brutal dictatorship and restored Haiti's destiny to its own people, but there is more to be done there if democracy and economic prosperity and basic human rights are to be safe-

guarded. I am proud of the role of the United States in stopping the unspeakable slaughter in Bosnia, the bloodiest conflict in Europe since World War II, a veritable case of human rights abuses. But now we have to persevere in strengthening Bosnia's democratic institutions, promoting its reconstruction, enabling refugees to return to their homes, helping those who can't, building institutions of democracy that have real integrity and durability. This year, the United States resettled 22,000 Bosnians. Next year, there will be more.

We also have to keep striving to bring to justice to those who caused the bloodshed, not only because it's right but because it is necessary for full reconciliation. Our Nation is now the major contributor to the international war crimes tribunals. We'll increase our support next year. We must bring Bosnia's war criminals to justice. And I believe strongly that before this decade and this century end, we should establish a permanent international court to prosecute crimes against humanity. This week delegates from many nations are meeting to undertake that task. The United States strongly supports them.

We have led in strengthening international institutions, including the creation of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights. Now, we have to ensure that Mary Robinson has the resources to do her job, and I am committed to increasing substantially America's support for that effort.

We've put the promotion of women's rights in the mainstream of American foreign policy, and I am very proud of that. This was highlighted, of course, by the First Lady's speech in Beijing, but I want to emphasize its major elements. We want to lead the world's efforts in combating trafficking in women. We want to steer more of our assistance to women and young girls. We want to recognize women's roles as democracy builders by encouraging full political participation.

Now, as I urged a year ago, I call on the Senate to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. Surely, this is not an issue of party but of principle. It is time to show

Source of  
problem:  
Eleanor  
F.D.R.

2004

Dec. 9 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1997

the world that America joins those 161 countries which have gone on record to oppose discrimination and violence against women around the world.

We continue speaking out for human rights without arrogance or apology, through our annual human rights reports, in meetings with foreign officials, in intensified advocacy for religious freedom around the world. As long as America is determined to stand for human rights, then free people all around the world will choose to stand with America.

But for all our efforts to prevent abuses, promote accountability, and push for reform, enduring progress must come from changes within the nations themselves. Democracy, the rule of law, civil society: Those things are the best guarantees of human rights over the long run. We have helped democracies on every continent solidify their reforms. We are working with China to promote the rule of law and institutions which will regularize it. We're helping post-conflict societies like El Salvador, Bosnia, Rwanda, Mozambique, to build a durable foundation for peace. We support NGO's working to support human rights and political liberalization. And we want to expand these efforts.

Supporting the spread of democracy, with respect for human rights, advances the values that make life worth living. It also helps nations in the information age to achieve their true wealth, for it lies now in people's ability to create, to communicate, to innovate. Fully developing those kinds of human resources requires people who are free to speak, free to associate, free to worship, and feel free to do those things. It requires, therefore, accountable, open, consistent governments that earn people's trust.

The key to progress on all these issues is for government and civic groups to work together. The NGO community is a vital source of knowledge and inspiration and action. We will keep faith with those working around the world, often at tremendous personal risk, for change within their societies. And in this 50th anniversary year, Amnesty International has asked world leaders to affirm that we will do all we can to uphold the principles of the Universal Declaration. I make that pledge to you today.

Clinton's  
pledge

Finally, I commend the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Foundation for their efforts to teach a new generation of Americans that the future of human rights is in their hands. Eleanor Roosevelt understood that our greatest strength abroad was the power of our example at home, our commitment to work together across the divides to create one from many and opportunity for all.

I believe our Founding Fathers knew a long time ago that their dedication to form a more perfect Union was an intentional statement of the English language; that is, they knew that there would never be a perfect union but that we would always have opportunities to make it more perfect in every age and time. And so let us here who are citizens of the United States honor this 50th anniversary by promising ourselves that we will always strive to make a more perfect Union here at home; to be a better model of liberty and justice; to be living proof to the cynics and the tyrants of the world that economic growth and constitutional democracy not only can go together but in the end must go together; to prove that diversity is not a source of weakness but a source of strength and joy; to prove that out of harmony of different views there can be a coherence of loyalty to a nation stronger than anything that can ever be enforced from above.

America has its own challenges today. We have our hate crimes; we have continuing discrimination. But we also see across party lines and across the region broader support for the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act," a new determination to eliminate all last vestiges of discrimination against women, a genuine depth of popular interest in resolving the racial divides which continue to bedevil us and a genuine interest and understanding in the increasing racial diversity that is shaping our country for the 21st century in ways that present not only racial but cultural and religious challenges and opportunities we have never known before.

There is plenty for us to do. And it is our responsibility to do it, to dedicate ourselves, in other words, to the eternal quest of a more perfect Union and the lasting goals of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

ix  
Constitutional democracy  
to totalitarianism!