

**The original documents are located in Box 5, folder “12-18-75 Pageant of Peace” of the Betty Ford White House Papers, 1973-1977 at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PAGEANT OF PEACE

THE ELLIPSE

Thursday - December 18, 1975

Departure: 5:28 P.M.

From: Terry O'Donnell <sup>TD</sup>

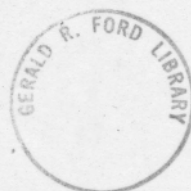
BACKGROUND

While every President since Calvin Coolidge has participated at least once during his Administration in the lighting of a symbolic National Christmas tree, the first "Christmas Pageant of Peace" was not organized until 1954 when a group of local civic and business leaders banded together to form Pageant of Peace, Inc. The tradition has continued and the Pageant has grown to become the focal point of the Yuletide season in the Nation's Capital.

The focus of the celebration is the national Christmas tree, a living 42-foot Colorado blue Spruce donated by the National Arborists Association as a continuing year-round symbol of the Pageant and all it represents. Prior to 1973, each year's tree came from a different State.

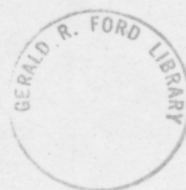
The Christmas Pageant of Peace, generally known as the lighting of the National Christmas Tree, is sponsored by the Pageant of Peace, Inc. The president of the organization, John W. Dixon, will be the master of ceremonies. The National Park Service is a co-sponsor. The event will be carried on Live Nationwide Television.

Your participation will involve observing a brief program, delivery of remarks and, finally, throwing of the switch to light the tree.



SEQUENCE

5:28 p. m.	You and Mrs. Ford board motorcade on South Grounds and depart en route Ellipse.
5:29 p. m.	Arrive Ellipse. Proceed on foot to off-stage holding area.
5:30 p. m.	You and Mrs. Ford arrive off-stage holding area and pause for announcement.
5:31 p. m.	"Ruffles and Flourishes" Announcement "Hail to the Chief"
5:31 p. m.	You and Mrs. Ford proceed on stage and take your seats. <u>Yours is the second stage left of the podium between Secretary Kleppe and Michele Lee, a Campfire Girl.</u> Mrs. Ford's is the second seat stage right of the podium between John W. Dixon and Assistant Secretary of Interior Nat Reed.
	LIVE NATIONWIDE TELEVISION ATTENDANCE: 2,000
5:32 p. m.	Grande Illumination Parade enters seating area.
	<u>NOTE:</u> The parade will be comprised of a Fife and Drum Corps, the Colonial Williamsburg Dancers, and the Continental Congress Singers.
5:35 p. m.	Brief remarks by John W. Dixon, Master of Ceremonies.
5:36 p. m.	"God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen" by the Continental Congress Singers.
5:37 p. m.	Dance by the Colonial Williamsburg Dancers.



3.

5:39 p. m. Prayer for Peace by The Reverend  
Demetrios Kalaris, Sts. Constantine  
and Helen Greek Orthodox Church.

5:40 p. m. "Wassil Song" by the New England  
Conservatory of Music Chorus.

5:43 p. m. Remarks by Secretary Thomas S.  
Kleppe.

5:45 p. m. Remarks by Boy Scout Christian  
Edward Rademacher.

NOTE: Upon completion of his  
remarks, Christian will shake hands  
with you as he returns to his seat.

5:46 p. m. Remarks by Campfire Girl Michele  
Adrienne Lee.

NOTE: En route the podium, Michele  
will present Mrs. Ford with a bouquet  
of flowers. As she returns to her  
seat, she will shake hands with you.

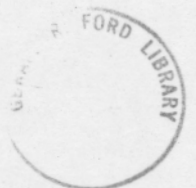
5:47 p. m. Introduction of you by John W. Dixon.

5:48 p. m. PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS.

LIVE NATIONWIDE TELEVISION

5:53 p. m. Your remarks conclude.

You remain standing and ask the Boy Scout  
and the Campfire Girl to join you at the switch  
box (stage left) in lighting the National Christmas  
Tree.





4.

With the two scouts to your left, you place your hand on the switch box with that of the children and ask them to throw the switch.

5:54 p. m.

The tree is lighted.

5:55 p. m.

You and the two scouts remain standing at the switch box for the singing of "Joy to the World" by the New England Conservatory of Music Chorus.

5:57 p. m.

You return to your seat upon completion of "Joy to the World."

5:58 p. m.

Benediction by His Excellency  
Bishop Eugene A. Marino,  
Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese  
of Washington.

5:59 p. m.

Singing of "O Come All Ye Faithful"  
by the audience and chorus.

6:01 p. m.

Thank you remarks by John Dixon.

6:02 p. m.

You and Mrs. Ford depart the stage and  
proceed to the motorcade for boarding.

6:02 p. m.

Music by the U. S. Marine Band.

6:04 p. m.

You and Mrs. Ford depart Ellipse en route South  
Grounds.

6:05 p. m.

Arrive South Grounds.

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