

The original documents are located in Box 11, folder “12/16/76 - Christmas Tree Lighting” of the Sheila Weidenfeld Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 14, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR:

ALL WHITE HOUSE/OEOB STAFF

SUBJECT:

The Christmas Pageant of Peace
Thursday, December 16, 1976, 4:45 p.m.
Ellipse

You and your family and friends are invited to attend the opening ceremony of the Christmas Pageant of Peace on the Ellipse, Thursday, December 16, 1976 at 4:45 p.m.

Tickets may be obtained by calling the White House Visitors Office (ext. 2200 or 2201). The program will begin at 5:00 p.m. and reserved seats will be held until 4:45 p.m.

The President and Mrs. Ford will light the National Community Christmas Tree at approximately 6:00 p.m.

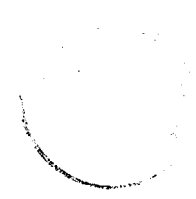
Happy Holidays!



Michael J. Farrell

Director

Office of White House Visitors



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CHRISTMAS TREE
BY W. DALE NELSON

WASHINGTON (AP) -- A 4Ø-POUND STEEL AND PLASTIC ORNAMENT WAS HOISTED TODAY TO THE TOP OF A 45-YEAR-OLD COLORADO BLUE SPRUCE WHICH IS MAKING ITS LAST STAND THIS YEAR AS THE CHRISTMAS TREE FOR THE WHITE HOUSE PAGEANT OF PEACE.,

"IT WILL BE NEXT YEAR'S YULE LOG," SAID NATIONAL PARK SERVICE RANGER GEORGE BERKLACY.

THE TREE, TRANSPLANTED HERE FROM SHICKSHINNY, PA., IN 1973, IS DYING. THERE IS LUSH GREEN GROWTH NEAR THE TOP, BUT MANY OF THE LOWER AND INTERIOR BRANCHES ARE DEAD., THE TREE HAS BEEN WIRED TO HELP KEEP IT TOGETHER FOR ITS FINAL CHRISTMAS.

"WHENEVER YOU MOVE A LARGE TREE LIKE THIS, YOU ARE GOING TO HAVE PROBLEMS," SAID WILLIAM RUBACK, MANAGER OF THE PARK ON THE ELLIPSE SOUTH OF THE WHITE HOUSE WHERE THE ANNUAL PEACE PAGEANT IS HELD.

THE SPRUCE WAS 40 FEET TALL WHEN IT WAS TRANSPLANTED, AND HAS GROWN ABOUT FOUR FEET.

BEFORE 1973, A CUT TREE WAS USED FOR EACH YEAR'S PAGEANT.. BERKLACY SAID THE PARK SERVICE INTENDS TO STICK TO A LIVING TREE FOR THE FUTURE, BUT WILL SELECT ONE FROM THE IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON AREA TO MINIMIZE THE SHOCK OF MOVING IT.,

"WE WANT TO GET ONE FROM THIS ENVIRONMENT," HE SAID.,

THE TREE-TOP ORNAMENT CONSISTS OF A SERIES OF TRANSLUCENT RED, YELLOW AND ORANGE PLASTIC SHAPES DESIGNED TO RESEMBLE STAINED GLASS, SURROUNDING A COPPER-COLORED STEEL DISK TO WHICH 15Ø SMALL LIGHTS ARE ATTACHED.

THE ORNAMENT, MOUNTED ON A FOUR-FOOT LENGTH OF PIPE, WAS HOISTED BY A CRANE AND LOWERED INTO A SLIGHTLY LARGER PIPE WHICH RUNS UP THE TRUNK OF THE TREE.

THE REST OF THE TREE WILL BE LIGHTED BY 3,ØØØ RED BULBS OF SEVEN WATTS EACH AND WILL HAVE 57 ORNAMENTS, EACH TWO TO THREE FEET IN DIAMETER. AFTER THE PAGEANT, ONE ORNAMENT WILL BE SENT TO THE GOVERNOR OF EACH OF THE STATES AND TERRITORIES.

THE TREE-TOP ORNAMENT WILL BE PRESENTED TO A BOYS 7 CHOIR FROM SAN FRANCISCO WHICH WILL SING DURING THE PAGEANT.. ALONG WITH OTHER DECORATIONS FOR THE TREE, THE ORNAMENT WAS DESIGNED BY F. F. LAGIUSA OF GENERAL ELECTRIC.

THE PAGEANT OPENS DEC. 16 WHEN PRESIDENT FORD THROWS A SWITCH TO LIGHT THE TREE. REINDEER FROM THE NATIONAL ZOO WILL ROAM IN AN ENCLOSURE AND A YALE LOG WILL BURN IN A FIRE PIT TO WARD OFF THE CHILL OF DECEMBER NIGHTS IN WASHINGTON.,

IT IS IN THIS PIT, OFFICIALS SAID, THAT THE TREE WILL BE BURNED NEXT CHRISTMAS.

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