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Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

TEXT OF A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE BY THE PRESIDENT

Merry Christmas! These two words conjure up all of the good feelings that mankind has ever held for itself and its creator: reverence, tenderness, humility, generosity, tolerance -- love. These are the stars we try to follow: These are the most enduring treasures we can bring to our world. I can remember a few Christmases in my own youth when just about the only thing we had to offer each other as a family was the love we shared, and the faith that together we could see things through to a better future. And it did. It made us work harder, study harder, try harder -- and it brought out qualities and depths of strength and character that none of us in those days thought we had.

The spirit of Christmas is ageless, irresistible and knows no barriers. It reaches out to add a glow to the humblest of homes and the statliest of mansions. It catches up saint and sinner alike in its warm embrace. It is the season to be jolly -- but to be silent and prayerful as well.

I know this will be a particularly happy Christmas for me. I celebrate it surrounded by those I love and who love me. I celebrate it by joining with all of our citizens in observing a Christmas when Americans can honor the Prince of Peace in a nation at peace.

The Ford family wishes you and your family a Christmas that brings all of the joy, the fulfillment, and the inspiration of this most precious of seasons may God's blessings be with you all.

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