

The original documents are located in Box 4, folder “12/17/74 - Remarks for Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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REMARKS FOR THE CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1974

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I AM DELIGHTED TO JOIN THIS HAPPY CELEBRATION TONIGHT --
TO LIGHT AND SHARE WITH YOU ALL THE NATION'S CHRISTMAS TREE.

National Park

AS A FORMER ~~FOREST~~ RANGER CONCERNED WITH CONSERVATION,

I AM PLEASED TO KNOW THAT THIS MAGNIFICENT TREE FROM THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA IS ALIVE AND GROWING -- AND WILL BE THE NATIONAL COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS TREE FOR MANY YEARS TO COME.

AND AS A PRESIDENT VITALLY CONCERNED WITH THE SAVING OF ENERGY, I ALSO WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT THE ELECTRICITY CONSUMED BY THE LIGHTING OF THIS TREE, IS A CONSIDERABLE REDUCTION OF WHAT HAS BEEN USED IN PREVIOUS YEARS. AND THAT IS THE WAY IT SHOULD BE. THE GLOW OF CHRISTMAS SHOULD COME FROM A POWER SOURCE WE WILL NEVER RUN SHORT OF -- OUR ABIDING FAITH AND THE LOVE OF GOD.

THE TRUE SPIRIT OF THIS SEASON CAN BEST BE SEEN IN OUR
FACES. THE CHILDREN HERE TONIGHT, LIKE MILLIONS OF CHILDREN
AROUND THE WORLD, REFLECT THE WONDER AND EXCITEMENT OF
ANTICIPATION. THOSE OF US WHO ARE OLDER LOOK FORWARD TO THE
WARMTH OF REUNIONS WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS.

TRADITIONS, TREASURED MEMORIES AND SHARED HOPES,
ARE THE TIES THAT BIND FAMILIES AND NATIONS TOGETHER. THE
TREE BEFORE US IS PART OF OUR NATIONAL TRADITION AND, AS SUCH,
IT HAS SEEN BOTH TRIUMPHS AND TRAGEDIES.

CHRISTMAS AND THE NEW YEAR ^{have} ~~HAS~~ ALWAYS BEEN A TIME TO

REFLECT ON THE PAST -- AND THEN LOOK AHEAD TO THE FUTURE.

I FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT 1975 WILL BE A BRIGHTER YEAR FOR AMERICA.

BUT IT MUST ALSO BE A BRIGHTER YEAR FOR THE ENTIRE WORLD IF WE,

AS A NATION, ARE TO PROSPER.

AND SO, I WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH YOU MY PERSONAL

LIST OF CHRISTMAS WISHES: AT THE TOP OF MY LIST ARE PEACE,

ECONOMIC WELL-BEING FOR ALL, AND A CARING CLIMATE THAT WILL

PERMIT EVERYONE TO ACHIEVE THE FULLEST POTENTIAL OF THEIR HUMAN

GIFTS. I WISH THIS NATION A STRONG FUTURE OUT OF A PROUD PAST.

AND I WISH EVERY ONE OF US THE REALIZATION OF LOVE AND BELONGING.

BILLIONS OF WORDS HAVE BEEN WRITTEN, SUNG AND SPOKEN
ABOUT THE TRUE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS. NONE HAVE EVER SAID IT
MORE ELOQUENTLY THAN: "ON EARTH, PEACE, GOOD WILL TOWARD
MEN!" AND THAT IS MY FINAL CHRISTMAS WISH FOR US ALL.

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