

The original documents are located in Box 21, “12/15/75 - Remarks at Christmas Party for the White House Staff (Includes draft)” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN...

CHRISTMAS HAS A SPECIAL MEANING FOR
ALL OF US, REGARDLESS OF OUR RELIGIOUS BELIEFS,
BECAUSE IT IS A HOLIDAY BUILT AROUND THE
CONCEPT OF THE FAMILY. WHAT BEGAN WITH
JOSEPH AND MARY AND THE INFANT JESUS IN A
BETHLEHEM MANGER -- THE SENTIMENTS OF
TOGETHERNESS AND LOVE -- HAS SPREAD OVER
THE CENTURIES TO MILLIONS AND MILLIONS OF
HOMES IN EVERY CORNER OF THE WORLD AND THE
JOY OF THE CHRISTMAS SEASON HAS BECOME AN
ALMOST UNIVERSAL BLESSING.

BETTY AND I HAVE INVITED YOU TO OUR
HOME TONIGHT -- AND IT'S CONVENIENTLY CLOSE
TO WORK -- BECAUSE YOU ARE ALL PART OF THE
WHITE HOUSE FAMILY.

WE WANTED YOU ALL TO BE THE FIRST TO GATHER

AROUND OUR CHRISTMAS TREE AND SHARE IN THE

WARMTH OF THE HOLIDAY SEASON WITH US.

IT'S NOT A TIME FOR SPEECHES, BUT FOR FRIENDLY

TALK AND RELAXATION.

BUT I DID WANT TO TELL YOU THAT I DO KNOW,
AND DO VERY MUCH APPRECIATE, THE LONG HOURS
AND HARD WORK YOU HAVE BEEN PUTTING IN TO
HELP ME DO MY JOB. I REALIZE IT HAS
INTERFERED WITH YOUR OWN CHRISTMAS SHOPPING
AND TIME WITH YOUR OWN FAMILIES AND ALL I CAN
SAY IS, THANK YOU.

AND TO EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU, AND TO YOUR
LOVED ONES, FROM THE FORD FAMILY -- HAVE A
MERRY, MERRY CHRISTMAS AND MAY NEXT YEAR BE
THE HAPPIEST YEAR OF YOUR LIVES.

END OF TEXT

~~THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN...~~

Not
Used

WHITE HOUSE STAFF CHRISTMAS PARTY

MONDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1975

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LET ME THANK MAJOR BOB BARRETT AND SANTA CLAUS

FOR THIS VERY UNUSUAL GIFT -- BUT AS I LOOK AT IT, I SEE ONE

VERY BIG DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THIS STAFF AND MY STAFF HERE

AT THE WHITE HOUSE. THEY BOTH MAY BE RED, WHITE AND BLUE --

(TAKE ONE PART OF THE STAFF APART) -- BUT MY STAFF DOESN'T

COME APART UNDER PRESSURE.

I JUST WISH FLIP WILSON COULD HAVE BEEN HERE TO SEE THIS.

AT MY BIRTHDAY PARTY, FLIP CALLED BETTY THE FIRST MAMA ---

HE CALLED ME THE FIRST PAPA --- WAIT'LL HE SEES THE FIRST SANTA!

JOHN CALHOUN, THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

THIS HAS CERTAINLY BEEN A WONDERFUL PROGRAM

BUT I HAPPEN TO KNOW IT WASN'T THE ONE BOB BARRETT HAD

ORIGINALLY PLANNED. ORIGINALLY, HE WAS GOING TO HAVE

MEMBERS OF THE WHITE HOUSE STAFF DO SOME OF THE THINGS THEY

ARE MOST FAMOUS FOR.

DICK CHENEY WAS GOING TO MAKE UP A SCHEDULE.

BOB HARTMANN WAS GOING TO WRITE A SPEECH.

JACK MARSH WAS GOING TO TALK ABOUT THE BICENTENNIAL.

AND DAVID HUME KENNERLY WAS GOING TO READ A FEW PAGES
FROM HIS DIARY.

WE THOUGHT BETTER OF THAT THOUGH. WE WANT TO

TAKE THE "X" OUT OF CHRISTMAS -- NOT PUT IT IN.

LET ME ALSO THANK THE GLEE CLUB OF THE U.S. NAVAL ACADEMY
FOR JOINING US AND LENDING THEIR WARM HOLIDAY SONGS TO THE
OCCASION. IT'S ALWAYS A PLEASURE WHEN YOU HEAR VOICES
RAISED IN PERFECT HARMONY. NOW IF WE COULD ONLY CONVINCING
THE CONGRESS.

AFTER PRESIDENT IS IN POSITION, BARRETT INTRODUCES SANTA CLAUS (JOHN CALHOUN)

BARRETT: IT'S A HAPPY TIME TO BE SURE. CERTAINLY THESE FESTIVE HOLIDAYS ARE MADE EVEN MORE SPECIAL WITH US HAVING THE PRIVILEGE OF SHARING THEM WITH THE PRESIDENT AND FIRST LADY.

HOWEVER, AS SPECIAL AS THE PRESIDENT AND FIRST LADY ARE, THERE IS ANOTHER PERSON WHO AT THIS TIME OF YEAR, REALLY MUST BE GIVEN TOP BILLING. LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THE CHRISTMAS HARBINGER OF JOY, MR. SANTA CLAUS!

BARRETT: WELL, SANTA, HERE YOU ARE AGAIN. IT'S GREAT TO SEE YOU. HOW'S EVERYTHING GOING?

SANTA: OH, NOT BAD, I'VE GOT QUITE A BIT ON MY MIND RIGHT NOW.

BARRETT: YEAH. BUT YOU'RE SANTA CLAUS. YOU CAN HANDLE IT. AFTER ALL THERE CAN ONLY BE ONE SANTA, RIGHT?

2

SANTA: WELL, YES, THAT'S TRUE BUT IT ISN'T AS EASY AS YOU THINK.

BARRETT: WHEN AND HOW DID YOU BECOME SANTA?

SANTA: WELL, IT WAS ABOUT 16 MONTHS AGO IN AUGUST THAT RIGHT OUT OF THE BLUE, I BECAME SANTA CLAUS. OF COURSE, THAT DIDN'T HELP ME. MOST SANTA'S ASSUME THE POSITION IN NOVEMBER WHEN IT'S CHILLY AND MORE REFLECTIVE OF THE CHRISTMAS SEASON. SUMMER SANTAS HAVE A ROUGH ROAD TO HOE.

BARRETT: HAVE YOU GOTTEN EVERYTHING YOU'VE INTENDED TO AS SANTA?

SANTA: OH SURE. I GOT REINDEER ONE, A RED-NOSED REINDEER AND EVERYTHING ELSE. BUT YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE HOW MANY PEOPLE CRITICIZE SANTA.

BARRETT: REALLY? I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT!

SANTA: BELIEVE IT! DO YOU KNOW HOW MANY PEOPLE WANT TO BE SANTA CLAUS THESE DAYS. THERE'S A GUY WITH A BELL ON EVERY CORNER LOOKING FOR SOMEONE TO THROW SOMETHING INTO HIS POT.

BARRETT: WHAT KIND OF CRITICISM DO YOU RECEIVE?

SANTA: WELL, JUST TO GIVE YOU A FEW EXAMPLES. SANTA IS FOR EVERYBODY. FOR ME TO GET TO EVERYBODY, I'VE GOT TO GET IN REINDEER ONE AND GO LIKE BLAZES ALL OVER THE PLACE. WHEN I DO LOTS OF PEOPLE SAY I SHOULD STAY HOME AT THE NORTH POLE TENDING TO THE TOYS.

BARRETT: THAT'S THOUGH. THEY GET YOU COMING AND GOING, HUH?

SANTA: THAT'S NOT SO BAD. BUT THERE'S MORE. LOTS OF PEOPLE ARE ALWAYS CRITICIZING THE LITTLE ELVES I'VE GOT WORKING FOR ME. YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE THE HOURS THEY PUT IN ONLY TO HAVE SOME OTHER ASPIRING SANTA CLAUS SAY HE COULD DO IT BETTER.

BARRETT: WELL TO BE HONEST, I HAVE NOTICED SOME CRITICISM.

SANTA: SOME! LET ME TELL YOU, THE NORTH POLE PRESS CORPS CAN REALLY KEEP YOU HOPPING. LAST SUMMER, I THOUGHT IT WOULD

BE A GOOD IDEA TO GIVE A LITTLE EXPOSURE TO MRS. CLAUS. WHAT THE HECK, SHE'S THE ONE MAKING ALL THOSE DOLLS AND TAKING CARE OF ALL THE LADIES AROUND THE WORLD. ANYWAY, YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE HOW MANY CHIMNIES WERE TEMPORARILY CLOSED TO ME FOR A WHILE.

BARRETT: YOU MUST BE VERY TEMPTED TO PUT COAL IN A LOT OF STOCKINGS.

SANTA: IT'S INTERESTING THAT YOU SHOULD PUT IT THAT WAY, BUT THAT WOULD BE SMALL AND PETTY IN ADDITION TO GETTING A LOT OF SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS UPSET.

BARRETT: BUT DON'T YOU HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF TRADITION GOING FOR YOU? I MEAN SOME THINGS DONT CHANGE, DO THEY?

SANTA: DON'T BE TOO SURE ABOUT THAT EVEN WHEN I'M SITTING AT HOME IN THE NORTH POLE WITH MRS. CLAUS I GET IT. LIKE WHO CAN TAKE ISSUE WITH THE BEAUTIFUL STATEMENT, "GOOD WILL TOWARDS MEN"? MRS. CLAUS DID. SHE SAID, "AND WOMEN TOO!"

BARRETT: WELL, NEVERTHELESS, I THINK YOU'RE A HELL OF A SANTA.

SANTA: THANKS, I FEEL PRETTY GOOD ABOUT WHAT I'M DOING. OF COURSE, THE ROMANTIC NOTIONS PEOPLE HAVE ABOUT SANTA MAKES THE JOB TOUGH. THERE'S BEEN LOTS OF MOVIES STARRING DIFFERENT GUYS PLAYING SANTA.

BARRETT: I DON'T WANT TO KEEP YOU MUCH LONGER KNOWING HOW BUSY YOU ARE BUT ONE FINAL QUESTION. HOW DO YOU THINK THINGS ARE GOING TO BE THIS CHRISTMAS AND FOR THE NEXT FEW YEARS?

SANTA: LET ME TELL YOU SOMETHING. IT MAY NOT BE THE EASIEST JOB IN THE WORLD BUT YOU CAN'T BEAT WHAT IT GIVES YOU. WHO ELSE IS SO SPECIFICALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR "PEACE ON EARTH," OR GETTING THE RIGHT GIFTS UNDER EVERYBODY'S CHRISTMAS TREE? NO, I'LL TELL YOU, DON'T LISTEN TO MY COMPALINING CAUSE IN SPITE OF ALL THE CHRISTMAS LISTS, I HAVE TO READ AND GIFTS I MUST PREPARE, I WOULDN'T BE ANYWHERE ELSE. YOU SEE, I AM SANTA AND RIGHT NOW, I'VE GOT THE BIGGEST BELL OF ALL AND I'M GOING TO RING IT.

MERRY CHRISTMAS EVERYBODY!