The original documents are located in Box 42, "12/15/76 - Christmas Party for Members of the Press Corps" of the President's Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE TREADERS DAS SHEET

CHRISTMAS PARTY FOR MEMBERS OF THE PRESS CORPS,

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1976

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IT'S ALWAYS A PLEASURE TO WELCOME MY FRIENDS FROM

THE FOURTH ESTATE TO A CELEBRATION AT THE WHITE HOUSE.

WITH A LONG AND HECTIC CAMPAIGN, AND WITH A GREAT

MANY HISTORIC EVENTS TO COVER, THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS CORPS HAS

CERTAINLY DISTINGUISHED ITSELF THIS YEAR.

AS WE ENTER THE CHRISTMAS SEASON, WHO COULD EVER FORGET

TOM DEFRANK'S GRAPHIC PORTRAYAL IN PEORIA, ILLINOIS,

OF A SHEPHERD KEEPING WATCH OVER HIS FLOCK BY NIGHT?

-3-

AS WE APPROACH THE END OF 1976, I KNOW THAT MANY

OF YOU STILL HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT MY FUTURE. IF YOU DO,

I UNDERSTAND THAT JOHN CONNALLY OR RONALD REAGAN WOULD BE HAPPY

TO ANSWER THEM FOR YOU.

I DO WANT TO CLEAR UP TWO RUMORS, HOWEVER . . .

FIRST -- IT IS TRUE THAT I HAVE BEEN OFFERED A VISITING

PROFESSORSHIP AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN . . . AND SECOND --

NO, IT IS NOT IN THE AREA OF EASTERN EUROPEAN HISTORY.

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-5-

BUT THIS IS A PARTY AND I HAVE NO INTENTION OF MAKING ANOTHER SPEECH -- ALTHOUGH I DO WANT TO REMIND YOU THAT AN ELECTORAL COLLEGE BIG ENOUGH TO GIVE YOU EVERYTHING YOU WANT IS AN ELECTORAL COLLEGE BIG ENOUGH TO TAKE FROM YOU EVERYTHING YOU HAVE. LET ME SAY IN CLOSING THAT IT HAS BEEN A GREAT

EXPERIENCE TO WORK WITH ALL OF YOU, TO GET TO KNOW MANY OF YOU

PERSONALLY, AND TO NUMBER SO MANY OF YOU AMONG MY FRIENDS.

-7-

I HAVE A GENUINE AFFECTION FOR YOU AND GREAT RESPECT

FOR THE WORK YOU DO SO WELL. IT IS IMPORTANT WORK.

THOMAS JEFFERSON SAID IF HE HAD A CHOICE BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND

A FREE PRESS AS THE PROTECTOR OF A FREE SOCIETY, HE WOULD CHOOSE

THE PRESS. TOM HAD A POINT, BUT I WOULDN'T WANT TO PUT HIS

THEORY TO THE TEST.

IT WAS MY DEAR FRIEND PETE LISAGOR WHO SAID HIS JOB WAS TO ''WALK DOWN THE MIDDLE OF THE STREET AND BREAK WINDOWS ON BOTH SIDES,'' BREAKING THROUGH THE POMPOSITY AND THE RHETORIC, GETTING TO THE REAL STORY, TELLING IT LIKE IT IS.

-9-

THAT'S WHAT YOUR PROFESSION IS ALL ABOUT.

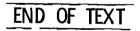
WHAT ALL OF YOU ARE DEDICATED TO, WHAT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

DEPEND ON YOU FOR.

IF YOU DO IT HALF AS WELL AS PETE LISAGOR DID, I HAVE NO FEAR

FOR THE FUTURE OF THIS COUNTRY.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL.



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REMARKS AT THE CHRISTMAS PARTY FOR MEMBERS

OF THE PRESS CORPS, DECEMBER 15, 1976

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END OF TEXT