

JANUARY 1, 1975

Office of the White House Press Secretary
(Vail, Colorado)

NOTICE TO THE PRESS

Late yesterday afternoon, President Ford received a telephone call from French President Valery Giscard d'Estaing in Paris. The two Presidents exchanged New Year's greetings. Giscard pledged to continue the cooperation which the two Presidents agreed to in Martinique.

Early last evening President Ford was notified that Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas had suffered a stroke while visiting Nassau, in the Bahamas. The President phoned Mrs. Douglas in Nassau to express his sympathy and offer his help. At 10:30 last night Chief Justice Warren Burger phoned President Ford to give him a further report on Justice Douglas' condition.

At President Ford's direction, Justice Douglas' doctor, Dr. N. Thomas Connally of Arlington, Virginia was flown to Nassau from Andrews Air Force Base by military plane, leaving at 11:30 p.m. and arriving at 2:00 a.m. Also at President Ford's direction, a C-9 Air Force Medical Evacuation plane from Homestead Air Force Base, Florida, picked up Justice Douglas in Nassau at 6:18 this morning and flew him to Andrews Air Force Base. Justice Douglas was admitted to Walter Reed Hospital in Washington at 9:20 this morning.

The Supreme Court reports that Justice Douglas suffered an "apparent cerebral vascular accident," or in laymen's language, a stroke. At mid-morning, Justice Douglas was reported resting comfortably and alert, but in serious condition in the intensive care unit at Walter Reed. His vital signs are stable.

Chief Justice Burger is expected to call the President later today to give him a further report on Justice Douglas' condition.

(MORE)

President Ford's guests began arriving about 9:30 pm for the New Year's Eve party in the living-dining room of his house. There was a snack table with cheese and crackers, raw vegetables and dip, cookies and fruitcake. A few minutes before midnight, (New York State) champagne was passed out. The TV was turned on to the Times Square coverage, with Guy Lombardo and Ben Grauer.

The President and his guests counted down the last few seconds before midnight. At midnight, President and Mrs. Ford toasted each other in champagne in front of the fireplace, and kissed. President and Mrs. Ford then went around the room wishing their guests a happy new year. The President said he had not made a new year's resolution. The party broke up shortly after 1 a. m.

The President slept a little later than usual this morning. He went skiing about 11:00 a. m. He plans to work this afternoon, watch some football on TV, and have a private dinner with his family.

We plan no further announcements today. Any bill signings or other Presidential actions will be announced on the press plane and to the pool on Air Force One tomorrow.

#