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DECEMBER 31, 1975

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
IN HIS
BICENTENNIAL MESSAGE

THE OVAL OFFICE

3:41 P.M. EST

Good evening.

We stand tonight at a very important threshold. Within the next few hours, we will usher in not only a New Year, not only the final quarter of the 20th century, but a fresh new chapter in American history, our third century as a Nation.

Behind us lie 200 years of toil and struggle, 200 years of accomplishment and triumph. We remain, in Lincoln's words, "The last, best hope of earth." But, what lies ahead? Shall we let the coming year slip into the record books virtually unnoticed and undistinguished except for the fanfare of a gigantic birthday party? Or, shall we make 1976 the beginning of a very special time, a time that sparks a renaissance of the American spirit, a time of rededication to liberty and justice for all Americans, a time that revives and strengthens the universal human yearning for freedom all over the world.

This is the very central question that we face tonight. Let's each of us, in the days ahead, consider what answer we shall give in our own personal lives. Remembering the heritage of 200 years, let us ask what we must do to earn an honored place in the memories of the generations to come.

Then, let us resolve that 1976 shall be the year that Americans reunite in the age old commitment to liberty for ourselves and for the peoples all over the world.

Thank you, and may God bless you with a happy New Year.

END (AT 3:43 P.M. EST)