

**The original documents are located in Box 21, “12/18/75 - Remarks on the Lighting of the National Christmas Tree” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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LIGHTING OF THE NATION'S CHRISTMAS TREE

THE ELLIPSE - THURSDAY - DECEMBER 18, 1975

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THANK YOU, MR. DIXON

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN....

MAYOR WASHINGTON

MR. AMBASSADOR

SECRETARY KLEPPE

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

- 1 -

AS WE GATHER HERE BEFORE OUR NATION'S CHRISTMAS TREE --

SYMBOLIC OF THE COMMUNION OF AMERICANS AT CHRISTMAS TIME --

WE REMIND OURSELVES OF THE ETERNAL TRUTHS BY WHICH WE LIVE.

WE CELEBRATE THE VIRTUES OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT - FAITH IN GOD

AND LOVE OF ONE ANOTHER - AND THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF

AMERICA -- LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL.

IN OUR 200 YEARS, WE AMERICANS HAVE ALWAYS HONORED  
THE SPIRITUAL TESTAMENT OF 2,000 YEARS AGO. WE EMBRACED  
THE SPIRIT OF THE PRINCE OF PEACE SO THAT WE MIGHT FIND PEACE  
IN OUR OWN HEARTS AND IN OUR OWN LAND AND, HOPEFULLY,  
IN THE WORLD AS WELL.

CHRISTMAS IS A CELEBRATION OF LOVE.  
IT IS A TIME OF JOY, OF GIVING, OF CARING. WE RENEW AND  
WE DEMONSTRATE OUR CONVICTION THAT IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE  
THAN TO RECEIVE . . . TO BELIEVE THAN TO DOUBT . . . TO HOPE  
THAN TO DESPAIR . . . TO LOVE THAN TO STAND APART.

WE ARE A NATIONAL FAMILY CALLED AMERICA.

WE COME FROM VARIED BACKGROUNDS. WE LIVE IN AREAS

FAR APART FROM EACH OTHER. WE HAVE DIFFERENT DREAMS.

BUT WE ARE UNITED THIS CHRISTMAS BY OUR COMMON COMMITMENT  
TO ONE ANOTHER.

WE HAVE MUCH TO BE GRATEFUL FOR AS WE ENTER

THIS CHRISTMAS SEASON. WE ARE AT PEACE AND, THROUGH

OUR EFFORTS, SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE TOWARD

A MORE DURABLE PEACE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

YES, WE HAVE ENDURED ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES. BUT OUR NATION  
AND WE IN THE AMERICAN FAMILY CAN NOW LOOK FORWARD  
TO A MORE PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR. AND, ON THIS EVE OF OUR  
BICENTENNIAL YEAR, LIBERTY AND JUSTICE STILL BURN BRIGHTLY  
AS THE GUIDING STARS OF OUR NATION.

WE PRAY, THIS CHRISTMAS, NOT ONLY FOR OURSELVES  
AND OUR COUNTRY BUT FOR ALL OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS ON EARTH.  
WE ASK FOR THE STRENGTH AND RESOLUTION TO HELP LIFT THE BURDENS  
OF POVERTY, IGNORANCE, HUNGER AND DISEASE FROM THE MINDS  
AND BODIES OF MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN EVERYWHERE.

AS WE ENTER AMERICA'S THIRD CENTURY, LET US MAKE SURE  
WE CARRY WITH US OUR ABIDING FAITH IN THE ULTIMATE TRIUMPH  
OF PEACE ON EARTH AND THE LIVING EXAMPLE OF GOOD WILL TO ALL  
MEN AND WOMEN. LET US JOIN THE GREAT PRINCIPLES OF OUR  
PAST /- SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL /- WITH THE GREAT PROMISE  
OF OUR FUTURE.

WITH THE HELP OF GOD, AMERICA'S THIRD CENTURY WILL BE OUR  
PROUD LEGACY TO SO MANY GENERATIONS YET TO COME.

TONIGHT, AS WE LIGHT THE NATIONAL CHRISTMAS TREE,

BETTY JOINS ME IN WISHING ALL OF YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND

A NEW YEAR OF PEACE AND HAPPINESS.

(THE PRESIDENT LIGHTS CHRISTMAS TREE.)

END OF TEXT