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Christmas Greeting to the Nation
December 25, 1993

The President. On this Christmas Day all over our Nation, Americans are gathering in celebration of faith and family and tradition.

Hillary Clinton. This season has a special magic. It may be cold outside, but we all feel an inner warmth. We are renewed with every kindness we give and receive. The celebration is as big as the world, and yet, it is as private as every Christmas wish that a child of any age has ever dreamed.

The President. So on this day, our greatest gift is the one within, the emergence and the sharing of our better selves. Our Christmas prayer is that each of us be given the strength to bring peace and good will to every community and to every American, especially to every child. Peace for them is our greatest wish.

We are especially grateful to the men and women of our Armed Forces who are overseas this holiday away from their own families, preserving the freedoms that the rest of us cherish. We wish all Americans a joyous and blessed holiday.

Merry Christmas.

Hillary Clinton. And a happy New Year.

NOTE: The greeting was videotaped at 12:40 p.m. on December 16 in the Diplomatic Reception Room at the White House for broadcast on December 25. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

The President's Radio Address
December 25, 1993

Good morning. On this Christmas morning, I won't keep you very long because I know many of you may still have presents under your trees waiting to be opened. But I do want to send my warmest Christmas greetings to all Americans.

For Hillary, Chelsea, and me, this is our first Christmas in Washington. We've taken great joy in decorating the White House with trees and ornaments and decorating our own Christmas tree upstairs in the residence. We've taken even greater joy in seeing our fellow Americans share in the beauty and the history of their house, the people's house, here in our Nation's Capital, as tens of thousands have come through to see the White House at Christmastime.

Like so many of you, we've been joined by relatives and friends. We've been reminded of all we have to be thankful for. For this holiday season is a time to remember what we value and what gives our lives meaning. Today Christians celebrate God's love for humanity made real in the birth of Christ in a manger almost 2,000 years ago. The humble circumstances of His birth, the example of His life, the power of His teachings inspire us to love and to care for our fellow men and women.

On this day we should be especially grateful that here in America we all have the freedom to worship God in our own way, for our faith is purest when it is the offering of a free and joyous spirit. We are a nation of many faiths and beliefs, united in a sense of mutual respect, shared values, and common purpose. Each of our faiths teaches that none of us can live alone, for we all belong to something larger than ourselves. Each teaches that we can see the image of God reflected in our fellow men and women, whatever their creed or color. Each teaches that our responsibilities to God are reflected in our responsibilities to each other. "If I am not for myself, who will be for me?" the Rabbi Hillel asked. "But if I am only for myself, who am I?"

Part of the miracle of this season is that each of us can hear what Abraham Lincoln called "the better angels of our nature." As we gather with our families, our friends; as we hear stories of our parents and grandparents; as we delight in the laughter of our own children and grandchildren, we're reminded again that we are part of a great sea of humanity including those who