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Remarks at a White House Children's Christmas Party

December 20, 1996

The President. Thank you. Give them a hand. Weren't they great? [*Applause*] Hello.

Children. Hello. Hi, Bill Clinton.

The President. Thank you, Antonio. Welcome to the White House. We're very glad to have you here. Every year, the First Lady and I love to meet with some children about this time and read the night before Christmas story, because Christmas is really a time for children, isn't it?

Children. Yes.

The President. And a time when we give gifts to each other and to our children to say how important you are. And it's a very special time for us. You know, Hillary wrote a book about children and families, and just today she gave a great gift—she gave the money that came in from the book to children's hospitals all across the country and to other things for children.

And one of the things that we hope will come out of this is that not only all of you here but all the children all over our country will feel very special; and as Christmas celebrates the birth of baby Jesus, that all the little children in our country will feel that they are very, very special.

So I want you to listen carefully to this story. A lot of you know this story, don't you?

Children. Yes.

The President. Do you?

The First Lady. You can chime in?

The President. So you can chime in. If you know—if you know any of the lines when I read it, in this wonderful book—see the pictures, can you see it—you say the lines, too. Okay? Okay, here we go. "The Visit of St. Nicholas."

[*At this point, the President read the story.*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:47 p.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

December 15

In the evening, the President and Hillary Clinton attended the production of "Christmas in Washington" at the National Building Museum. The show was taped for broadcast on NBC television December 18.

December 16

The President named the 60 recipients of the first annual Presidential Early Career Awards for Scientists and Engineers.

December 17

The President announced that Carol H. Rasco will be Senior Adviser to the Secretary and Director of the America Reads Challenge at the Department of Education.

In the evening, the President had a teleconference with newly elected United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan and outgoing U.N. Ambassador Madeleine K. Albright concerning Mr. Annan's acceptance speech before the General Assembly and the future of the United Nations.

December 18

In the afternoon, the President met with a bipartisan group of mayors in the Roosevelt Room to discuss urban policy and the upcoming budgetary process.

December 19

In the morning, the President met with Minister Liu Huaquiu of China in the Oval Office.

The President announced his intention to appoint Kathleen Stevens Dougherty and Ruth E. Roitenberg to the Advisory Committee on the Arts of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

December 20

In the afternoon, the President met with former Senator Bob Dole in the Oval Office.