

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE
GOVERNOR'S CAROL LIGHTING
DECEMBER 5, 1976

ONCE AGAIN WE GATHER HERE ON THE STEPS OF OUR CAPITOL
TO MARK THE BEGINNING OF THE CELEBRATION OF OUR HOLY SEASON.
THIS YEAR THIS FESTIVE OCCASION IS BEING BROADCAST LIVE OVER
THE ENTIRE STATE, BY OUR EDUCATION RADIO-TELEVISION NETWORK.
I WANT TO EXPRESS MY APPRECIATION TO THE COLUMBIA BREAKFAST
OPTIMIST CLUB FOR SPONSORING THIS OCCASION.

CHRISTMAS HAS ALWAYS BEEN A WONDERFUL PART OF MY LIFE.
THE CHURCH SERVICES, THE BEAUTIFUL CAROLS, THE GATHERING OF
FRIENDS AND FAMILY, THE FIRESIDE, THE FEAST, THE EXCHANGE OF
GIFTS, THE EXCITEMENT AND LAUGHTER OF CHILDREN AS THEY SEARCH
THEIR STOCKINGS AND OPEN GIFTS AROUND THE TREE ON CHRISTMAS

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MORNING -- ARE ALL A PART OF THIS HAPPY SEASON.

TO MY FAMILY, THIS YEAR, CHRISTMAS IS ESPECIALLY
MEANINGFUL, FOR ONLY LAST WEEK WE WERE IN ISRAEL AND VISITED
BETHLEHEM. IT WAS AT THE END OF A LONG DAY AND WE ARRIVED
JUST AS DARK WAS FALLING. AS WE APPROACHED THE CITY, YOU
COULD SEE THE ROCKY HILLS AND THE BOULDER STREWN PLAINS BELOW.
THERE WERE STILL SHEPHERDS TENDING THEIR FLOCKS IN THE FIELDS --
THE NIGHT WAS CRYSTAL CLEAR AND THERE WAS A SLIGHT CHILL IN THE
AIR. AS I LOOKED UP IN THE SKY I SAW A NEW MOON AMONG THE STARS,
AND I COULDN'T HELP BUT THINK IT MUST HAVE BEEN JUST SUCH A
NIGHT NEARLY 2,000 YEARS AGO THAT OUR SAVIOUR WAS BORN -- BORN
IN A STABLE AND PLACED IN A MANGER FOR KINGS AND SHEPHERDS TO
COME AND WORSHIP HIM.

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TODAY, WE DO HAVE SO MUCH TO BE GRATEFUL FOR -- IN
THIS LAND OF PLENTY, OUR STATE AND NATION ARE RETURNING TO
MORE PROSPEROUS TIMES -- WE ARE AT PEACE AND OUR MATERIAL
BLESSINGS ARE MANY -- LET'S ALL BE THANKFUL FOR THESE, BUT
MORE THAN THAT LET'S ALSO USE THIS HOLY SEASON AS A TIME TO
REDEDICATE OUR LIVES TO HIM -- WHOSE BIRTH WE CELEBRATE.

MY FAMILY AND I WISH FOR EACH OF YOU HERE AND THOSE
THROUGHOUT OUR STATE, A HAPPY AND SAFE HOLIDAY SEASON AND
PEACE WITH PROSPERITY THROUGHOUT THE NEW YEAR.