

Message on the Observance of Christmas

December 8, 1992

During the Christmas season, millions of people around the world gather with family and friends to give thanks for their blessings and to recall the events that took place in Bethlehem almost 2,000 years ago. As we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, whose life offers us a model of dignity, compassion, and justice, we renew our commitment to peace and understanding throughout the world. Through His words and example, Christ made clear the redemptive value of giving of oneself for others, and His life proved that love and sacrifice can make a profound difference in the world. Over the years, many Americans have made sacrifices in order to promote freedom and human rights around the globe: the heroic actions of our veterans, the lifesaving work of our scientists and physicians, and generosity of countless individuals who voluntarily give of their time, talents, and energy to help others—all have enriched humankind and affirmed the importance of our Judeo-Christian heritage in shaping our govern-

ment and values. This Christmas we are especially grateful for the expansion of democracy and hope throughout the former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and elsewhere—progress that is being encouraged by the help of many Americans.

In some regions, however, the joy and peace that normally mark the Christmas season are marred this year by violence that is rooted in ethnic hatreds and nationalist rivalries. Our prayers go out especially in behalf of the victims of such fighting—just as our thoughts are with those who are helping to provide humanitarian relief. Their selfless, caring efforts are a wonderful example of the true meaning of Christmas.

Barbara joins me in wishing all of our fellow Americans a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

GEORGE BUSH

Note: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 9.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Situation in Somalia

December 10, 1992

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Beginning in January of this year with the adoption of U.N. Security Council Resolution 733, the United Nations has been actively addressing the humanitarian crisis in Somalia. The United States has been assisting the U.N. effort to deal with a human catastrophe. Over 300,000 Somalis have died of starvation. Five times that number remain at risk, beyond the reach of international relief efforts in large part because of the security situation. As a result, voluntary relief organizations from the United States and other countries have appealed for assistance from outside security forces.

On November 29, 1992, the Secretary General of the United Nations reported to the Security Council that the deteriorating

security conditions in Somalia had severely disrupted international relief efforts and that an immediate military operation under U.N. authority was urgently required. On December 3, the Security Council adopted Resolution 794, which determined that the situation in Somalia constituted a threat to international peace and security, and, invoking Chapter VII of the U.N. Charter, authorized Member States to use all necessary means to establish a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations in Somalia. In my judgment, the deployment of U.S. Armed Forces under U.S. command to Somalia as part of this multilateral response to the Resolution is necessary to address a major humanitarian calamity, avert related threats to international peace and