

Hi, Fred Nelson for Community Comment,

Another Christmas is disappearing over the horizon of history. I hope that everyone had a pleasant Christmas. I realize that the day is not joyous for everyone. Some people are very much alone; some people are spending their first Christmas without a loved one by their side and some are spending their first Christmas without a home to go to. It seems that hatred and despair sometimes dominates the world. We seem to have more than our share of unrest in this country. With all the bad things happening, Christmas, more than ever, is a very important event and sends out a beacon of hope to many. On that special day, many years ago, the world was in no better shape than it is today. Then out of the darkness, appeared a beacon of hope, shining the light on a new beginning. To this day, that memory stirs good people to give of themselves in many ways. Man must have hope in order to survive and the Christmas season is an encouragement to many. So we greet one another with words such as 'joyful' and 'merry' and 'blessed' and 'peace' because that is our hope and dream. I am sure that all of us have memories of Christmas over the years. I can remember my first bicycle under the tree back in the 1930s, the tree lights my parents had were beautiful in the shapes of animals and pine cones with a white elephant being my favorite. One year, my dad was decorating the front yard with Christmas lights. He had laid out a string of empty light sockets and asked me to check to see if the electricity was on. I decided to take a short cut and stuck my finger in one of the sockets. After doing a little dance, I was very unhappy to report that the electricity was indeed, 'on'. I remember my uncle Harry, an old Englishman, usually full of 'Christmas Cheer' most every day of the week. We would sit down to dinner and no matter the size of the chicken or turkey, Harry would wheeze out with his English accent "Beautiful BUUUD-beautiful BUUD". I spent only one Christmas away from home and family and that was Christmas of 1946 when I was a member of the U.S. military occupation forces in Japan. That was a lonely time for us, away from our families, but we did have a good Christmas, unlike those military forces that were fighting for their lives during the five previous Christmases. I have always been most thankful for that particular year. The years go on, the seasons and the holidays roll by, sometimes enveloped in the fog of war, sometimes in the sunshine of peace. Whatever the future may bring, I wish that the season of Christmas will bring you hope and peace and may all of your dreams come true.

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