

# Point of View

## *Editorial* *The Spirit* *Of Christmas*

Ester Baldwin York once wrote, "And so we come again to Christmas with all its color and joy, its magic and wonder, its spirit of good will and warmth. But how do we come to Christmas? What it means to us depends on what we bring to it, not in gifts and outer display, but in the inner offerings of love and faith that abide in the heart."

These words seem especially appropriate for Christmas 1985. Many people are without jobs and most all of us are feeling the strains of inflation. The gifts under the tree will be fewer and smaller for many this year and this time of festive get-togethers will find many family members and friends absent from the gatherings. For many it may seem hard to feel the Christmas spirit this year and we will be remembering the happier times of Christmases past.

However, times like these can have special meaning for all of us. And it is perhaps necessary for us to face such times of hardship and uncertainty in order to refocus our hearts and our thoughts on the "true" meaning of Christmas.

As the angels sang on that first Christmas morn, this is a time for "peace on earth, good will towards men."

Though the feasting may not be as sumptuous nor the gifts as splendid, we still can feel the joy of the TRUE spirit of Christmas. We can spread the Christmas spirit by showing our love and concern for each other, and by sharing -- unselfishly -- whatever we have with those who are less fortunate than we. We can spread the spirit of Christmas with a cheerful greeting, a friendly word or a sincere smile.

But most of all, Christmas is a time of hope. "Joy to the world, the Lord has come; let earth receive its King," the angels sang. "Let every heart prepare Him room, and heaven and nature sing."

So, let us all focus on the most important meaning of Christmas -- the birth of Christ and its promise of peace and goodwill. Let us enjoy and share this spirit with one another. Let us all give the most important gifts of all to all we meet -- the gifts of our heart and our love.

Agnes M. Pharo put it this way: "What is Christmas? It is tenderness for the past, courage for the present, hope for the future. It is a fervent wish that every cup may overflow with blessings rich and eternal, and that every path may lead to peace."

### *A Christmas Prayer.*

Let us pray that strength and courage abundant be given to all who work for a world of reason and understanding \* that the good that lies in every man's heart may day by day be magnified \* that men will come to see more clearly not that which divides them, but that which unites them \* that each hour may bring us closer to a final victory, not of nation over nation, but of man over his own evils and weaknesses \* that the true spirit of this Christmas Season -- its joy, its beauty, its hope, and above all its abiding faith -- may live among us \* that the blessings of peace be ours -- the peace to build and to grow, to live in harmony and sympathy with others, and to plan for the future with confidence.

The entire staff of the SENTINEL-VOICE wish for each of you and all of yours, the greatest blessings of the Season.

PEACE.



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## *To Be Equal*

# THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

By John E. Jacob

Christmas is a very special holiday with profound religious meaning whose spirit has been absorbed into secular society. It is a day of renewal and rededication for a world that daily demonstrates its need for a massive infusion of the Christmas spirit.

Hunger is still the lot of much of mankind. As most Americans gather around the table for their holiday feast, people are dying in Africa's famine areas and even in America children often go to bed hungry for want of nourishment.

Poverty too, is with us. An affluent nation spends much of its energies hiding from the truth about the many millions who live in abject poverty. This is a season in which package-laden holiday shoppers avoid looking into the eyes of the ill-clad homeless who share their streets.

And racism too, is very much part of the American scene.

Even as high government officials extol the color-blind society we are supposed to have become, vandals drive a black family from a white neighborhood in Philadelphia, and most black people find less violent though still degrading examples of the fact that color still matters very much

in this America.

So a season characterized by the notion of goodwill to all mankind runs up against the reality of badwill to much of mankind. And yet it is also a season of hope, faith and optimism. Those sentiments have been vindicated many times over.

Who among us can ignore how much has been accomplished over the decades by people who had faith in themselves and in their ability to overcome? That they did overcome lends



John E. Jacob

substance to our optimism that we too will see the wickedness in our society overcome and selfishness replaced with a sense of community.

Amid all the chaos of meanness in the world today, Christmas and its message are a source of solace and challenge. For if we believe in the truth of the season's message of peace and brotherhood we must

dedicate ourselves to living that message 365 days each year.

If we believe in ourselves and in our capacity to overcome, we must also instill in our children pride in their heritage and the conviction that they are as good as anyone else and will succeed in their most ambitious dreams.

And the place to start is in the home, at Christmas time, by building family togetherness and sharing values and ideals.

The strength of a people is centered on the strength of their families, something

The Christmas spirit isn't in the fables about fat old men climbing down chimneys to leave presents; it's not in the frenzied rush of buying, and it's not in the materialistic concerns that pervade the way we celebrate a day that is holy.

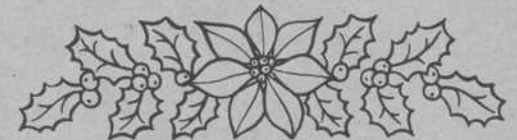
The true Christmas spirit lies in affirming the values of peace and goodwill, and pledging ourselves to spend the day thinking of those who have less than we do and how we can help them.

For if all Americans spent at least part of the holiday in such reflections, and if they

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black people have always known and acted upon. It is the young who will carry us to new heights in the future, and they must be equipped to do so by growing up in communities that expect much of them and give them the tools to achieve much.

become aware of the deep split between the message of Christmas and the way they conduct their lives the rest of the year, they may find the inner resources to act better and by doing so, to help create a better, fairer society.



*Develop Real Skills ~*

*He who  
has goods  
can sell them.*

*African Proverb*

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:

On behalf of members of the Board of School Trustees and all of the staff of the Clark County School District, I would like to thank the many citizens who expressed confidence in the future of our children and community by voting yes for new schools on December 10. An overwhelming number of parents and other dedicated volunteers worked long and hard to alert Clark County residents to the need for new elementary schools and additional classrooms. Because of the efforts of all those who voted and gave of their time and means, the future looks much brighter

for students in the years ahead.

The encouraging support, the fair and thorough coverage from the print and electronic media, and the marvelous teamwork translated into a win for all of Clark County. Our community will reap economic as well as educational benefits from the widespread team effort which has occurred in the past two months. It is gratifying to see what can be accomplished when so many people work toward a common goal.

Robert E. Wentz  
Superintendent of Schools