I have been reading the Christmas Carol to my family in accordance with our old custom. On this eve of Christmas I want to quote to you the pledge of old Scrooge when, after many vicissitudes, he had come to understand in his heart the great lesson and the great opportunity of Christmastide.

"I will honor Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year. I will live in the Past, the Present and the Future. The spirits of all Three shall strive within me. I will not shut out the lessons that they teach."

And at the end of the story is this glorious passage:

"Scrooge was better than his word. He did it all and infinitely more; and to Tiny Tim, who did NOT die, he was a second father. He became as good a friend, as good a master and as good a man as the good old city knew, or any other good old city, town or borough in the good old world. Some people laughed to see the alteration in him, but he let them laugh and little heeded them; for he was wise enough to know that nothing ever happened on this globe for good, at which some people did not have their fill of laughter in the outset. His own heart laughed; and that was good enough for him."

The reaching of the Sermon on the Mount is as adequate to the needs of men and of nations today as when it
was first proclaimed among the hills above the Sea of Galilee. In such measure as its spirit is accepted men and nations may lay claim to be seekers after peace on earth.

We of the Western Hemisphere have this year rendered special tribute to the spirit of Christmas, for we have pledged anew our faith in the arbitrament of reason and the practice of friendship. To that faith we bear witness tonight. May that faith make us happy today and tomorrow and through all the coming year.