

2311 Connecticut Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008
December 13, 1968

Dear Frank:

I have given a lot of thought to what you might say. I think it would be a mistake for me to write a script, or to anticipate in advance what you will see and feel. What you say has to be all Frank Borman.

The telecast on Christmas eve should basically contain what you see and what you feel (about what you are seeing), and it should wind up with a quotation, about which more in a moment. Nothing about the transcendental significance of all of it, or about Christmas eve and peace on Earth.

As for what you see and feel, I think these suggestions will help steer you into what you want to say, but again only if your instinct would take you into these areas anyway.

1. Everybody knows what the moon looks like from the Earth, but not how Earth looks from the moon. Describe it briefly, and compare it.
2. Compare your emotional reaction to orbiting the moon, to your previous experience in orbiting the Earth. What strikes you most about the moon. I remember your telling audiences on the Far East tour that if Mars was "the red planet" to astronomers, that the Earth, which was bathed in beautiful blue, could be "the blue planet" to people in space. Is it? Also, if the moon to Earth-bound people is a piece of cheese or a sliver of silver, what is the moon to an astronaut viewing it from orbit.
3. Viewing the moon's surface with the detachment of a scientist, just as you have so observed the Earth from orbit, what do you see.
4. As you orbit the moon and observe the Earth one-quarter million miles away, does the fact that this faraway planet holds all the things that are dear to you, have any special impact at the moment.
5. As you gaze at the distant planet Earth, you are aware that at this very moment each of its three and one-half billion inhabitants who has any knowledge of your mission—regardless of wealth, race, tongue, culture, national loyalty, politics, or religious affiliation—is thinking of you and your two companions.
6. In fact, when ever before, on Christmas eve, has so much of

mankind focused on a single event, and perhaps with total unanimity been prayerfully with three far-away men.

After you have addressed yourself to these areas, (and I would save some of it for the second telecast on the ninth orbit,) about the only thing I can think of to match the majesty of the occasion, and the evening, is to read the opening lines of Genesis. These lines are Christian the world over in the very real sense of the word, and I think would sound the universal appeal and sense of reverence that is called for.

You would be reading them while looking up at the Earth from the moon. You could switch to them by saying something like, "I would now like to read you the opening sentences of the Holy Scripture."

1. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.
2. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.
3. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.
4. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.
5. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.
6. And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.
7. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so.
8. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.
9. And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so.
10. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it was good.

I would close with, "Good night, good luck, a Merry Christmas, and God bless you all--all of you on the good Earth." That ends the broadcast.

Even though this is the Old Testament, and Christmas eve is identified with the New Testament, these words would, I think, be the most appropriate, most moving, and most welcome for the occasion. But only if you yourself feel completely comfortable in saying them.

I have the feeling that any direct message that you might compose reflecting on Christmas eve, conditions on Earth, and the way you feel about it at the moon, could get awfully sticky; it would be difficult not to sound pretentious or patronizing. On the other hand, these simple words from the Bible spoken feelingly and simply by you could only be accepted as a sincere expression of one human being to his fellows, and truly reflect the humility that the occasion must register. You could, by the way, take with you either a tiny edition of the Bible, or simply the opening page torn loose.

Do phone me when you get this, and if it doesn't fit I will try again.

All the best, Frank.

Yours,

Simon Bourgin