

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Friends & Relatives,

1991 was one for the history books.

President Bush and General Swartzkopf pulled a major coup with their victory in the Persian Gulf. I don't think people have learned this much about the Middle East since the hostages were taken in the Iranian embassy in Nov. 1979.

The rapid collapse of the 70 year old U.S.S.R. which started with the break of the Eastern Block a mere 18 months ago...

The reunification of Germany. Arabs, Israeli's, and Palestinians talking in the same room (without guns).

Anything in this world is possible with the right drive and ambition.

The release of the American hostages in Lebanon. God Bless Jean Pico – U.N. hostage negotiator who single handedly got these men home. Mr. Pico is one of the many men who lives among the shadows and whom we are grateful to and never even know it.

A devastating fire in the California hills; sometimes man is reminded that Mother Nature is still in firm control of the most basic of elements.

All this has happened while the U.S. has been drifting through a recession. Whose fault is it anyway? Did Reagan do this with excess defense spending? Did Bush do it with too little attention to domestic affairs? Are the S&L collapses to blame? We could choose the Japanese for the scape goat (as we did with the OPEC oil cartel which caused the recession of the late 70's and early 80's) but in both cases...we bought into it.

You don't need to be Alan Greenspan to see that their standard of living is improving while ours is faltering more and more as expensive, finished, high-tech products are traded for cheap diminishing raw materials plus some greenbacks.

This is all reminiscent of the strategy used by third world nations for survival. And we're rapidly approaching their type of debt structure.

I submit to you that the recession is the fault of every American who earns a paycheck here and sends it Japan, Korea, or Taiwan for a product. It is the fault of the slow, lethargic, bureaucratically top-heavy domestic firms who have failed to bring competitive TV's, VCR's, and cars to the market place.

This recession grew out of the yuppie lifestyles of the early eighties. It has been ten years in the making and its going to take a lot to get us out of it.

We know whose fault this recession is and who's problem it is. So who's going to fix it???

Okay I'll get off my soap box.

1991 was a year of significant change for myself as well. The most predominant of which has been my return to school. I've taken an extended leave of absence from Lockheed while I'm pursuing a second degree in Engineering. I'll be done in eighteen months. For those of you who don't have my new stats:

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Remember during this next year, there's only one way to be...your best. Always improve, always progress, never let down your guard, these are the requirements for success.

Merry Christmas

and a

Happy 1992

Mark A. Cottrell