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Montana Rural Youth Conference

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Instructions:
Prepare one form for insertion at the beginning of each record series.
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Record Type*: Speeches & Remarks

MONTH/YEAR of Records*: June-1980
(Example: JANUARY-2003)

(1) Subject*: Economy
(select subject from controlled vocabulary, if your office has one)

(2) Subject* Montana Rural Youth Conference

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* "required information"
GOOD AFTERNOON. I APPRECIATE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO TALK ABOUT MONTANA'S FUTURE.

RECENTLY I HEARD A FARMER DESCRIBED AS SOMEONE WHO GOES TO THE CITY OCCASIONALLY TO SEE WHERE HIS SONS AND HIS PROFITS HAVE GONE. UNFORTUNATELY, THAT DEFINITION STRIKES TOO CLOSE TO HOME TO BE VERY AMUSING.

I THINK MOST MONTANANS SHARE A COMMON GOAL. WE WANT BOTH OUR SONS AND OUR PROFITS TO STAY HERE IN THE BIG SKY COUNTRY.

WE WANT TO BUILD A STRONG, STABLE AND DIVERSE ECONOMY WHILE RETAINING MONTANA'S NATURAL BEAUTY AND QUALITY OF LIFE.

THE MESSAGE I WANT TO LEAVE TODAY IS THAT WORKING TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE OUR STATE A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE, A BETTER PLACE TO WORK, A BETTER PLACE TO FARM AND RANCH.

MONTANA WILL FACE SERIOUS CHALLENGES AND MASSIVE CHANGES IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS.

FORTUNATELY, WE HAVE BOTH THE OPPORTUNITY AND THE RESPONSIBILITY TO SHAPE OUR FUTURE. BUT WE MUST APPROACH THE TASK AGGRESSIVELY, Creatingly, AND WITH A CLEAR VISION OF WHERE WE ARE GOING.
MONTANA HAS AN INGLORIOUS HERITAGE OF EXPLOITATION AND MANIPULATION BY OUTSIDE INTERESTS.

FUR TRAPPERS, BUFFALO HUNTERS, TEXAS RANCHERS, AND MINERS MADE MINIMAL INVESTMENTS IN MONTANA, EXPLOITED NATURAL RESOURCES, AND MANIPULATED THE POLITICAL SYSTEM FOR SHORT-TERM GAIN. WHEN THE RESOURCES WERE GONE, THEY MOVED ON.

IN MANY WAYS, MONTANANS HAVE REVERSED THAT HERITAGE. WE RECENTLY ADOPTED A STRONG NEW CONSTITUTION. IT REPLACED ONE WRITTEN BY COPPER BARONS IN THE 1880'S.

WE HAVE REFORMED THE STATE TAX SYSTEM. WE INSTITUTED THE UTILITY SITING ACT, A COAL SEVERANCE TAX AND STRONG RECLAMATION LAWS TO INSURE THAT DEVELOPMENT IS IN THE BEST LONG-TERM INTERESTS OF THE STATE.

THERE WILL BE CONTINUED PRESSURE TO EXPLOIT MONTANA RESOURCES. THE UNITED STATES WILL CONTINUE TO NEED OUR GRAIN, COAL, OIL, WATER AND TIMBER. MONTANArecognizes that it is part of the nation and must contribute to national goals.

BUT WE ALSO KNOW THAT UNCONTROLLED DEVELOPMENT IS NOT NECESSARILY PROGRESS.

WE DON'T WANT TO BE ANOTHER WEST VIRGINIA. THERE, MASSIVE COAL DEVELOPMENT HAS LEFT ONLY ERODED MOUNTAIN SIDES, POLLUTED STREAMS AND ABJECT POVERTY.
WE DON'T WANT TO BE ANOTHER CLEVELAND WITH SKIES BLACKENED BY SMOKESTACKS AND WATER SO POLLUTED IT ACTUALLY BURNS.

MONTANANS MUST CONTINUE TO STRIVE FOR A STABLE, DIVERSIFIED ECONOMY. WE MUST MINIMIZE BOOM AND BUST DEVELOPMENT.

BUT ABOVE ALL, WE MUST AVOID TURNING CONTROL OVER TO OUTSIDERS.

OUR STATE HAS A LONG HISTORY OF LIVING WITH ECONOMIC DECISIONS MADE BEYOND OUR BORDERS. THAT EXPERIENCE HAS NOT ALWAYS BEEN A HAPPY ONE.

SO WE MUST CONTINUE TO SPEAK WITH A STRONG AND UNIFIED VOICE SO THAT MONTANA'S CONCERNS ARE NOT SWEPT ASIDE IN THE NATION'S FERVOR TO DEAL WITH IMMEDIATE PROBLEMS.

I WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS MORE SPECIFICALLY TWO OF MONTANA'S GREATEST CHALLENGES.

FIRST, THE CHALLENGE OF GUIDING INEVITABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT IN WAYS THAT PROTECT OUR NATURAL AND AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES AND QUALITY OF LIFE.

SECOND, THE CHALLENGE OF MAINTAINING AND STRENGTHENING OUR LARGEST INDUSTRY-AGRICULTURE.

COAL WILL PLAY A KEY ROLE IN THE NATION'S ENERGY FUTURE. AND HALF OF AMERICA'S STRIPABLE COAL RESERVES ARE IN MONTANA.
WE KNOW THERE WILL BE INCREASED PRESSURE TO BUY MONTANA'S COAL. THERE WILL BE PRESSURE TO BURN THAT COAL IN MONTANA AND EXPORT ELECTRICITY. THERE WILL BE PRESSURE TO USE MONTANA WATER TO TRANSPORT COAL THROUGH SLURRY PIPELINES. THERE WILL BE PRESSURE TO BUILD SYNTHETIC FUEL PLANTS USING ENORMOUS QUANTITIES OF BOTH COAL AND WATER.

ENERGY DEVELOPMENT MAY BE THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN MONTANA'S ENERGY FUTURE. ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CAN PROVIDE NEW JOBS AND NEW OPPORTUNITIES THAT WILL BENEFIT ALL MONTANANS.

BUT WE CANNOT GIVE UP THE RIGHT OF MONTANANS TO PARTICIPATE IN ENERGY PLANNING DECISIONS.

MONTANA HAS DEMONSTRATED THAT IT NOT ONLY HAS GOOD LAWS BUT GOOD ADMINISTRATORS. THE NATION HAS NOTHING TO FEAR FROM ENTRUSTING ENERGY DECISIONS TO OUR STATE.

THE REVERSE IS NOT NECESSARILY TRUE, HOWEVER. MAJOR DECISIONS AFFECTING MONTANA'S FUTURE SHOULD NOT BE MADE BY WASHINGTON BUREAUCRATS OR CORPORATE LEADERS IN EASTERN BOARD ROOMS.

A NUMBER OF PROPOSALS IN CONGRESS, HOWEVER, WOULD TAKE AWAY THE ABILITY OF MONTANANS TO SHAPE OUR OWN FUTURE.

THE PROPOSED ENERGY MOBILIZATION BOARD WOULD BE GIVEN UNPRECEDENTED POWERS TO PRE-EMPT STATE AND LOCAL LAWS. A BOARD OF UNELECTED BUREAUCRATS IN WASHINGTON, D.C., WOULD HAVE THE POWER TO OVERTURN STATE AND LOCAL LAWS AND EVEN COMPROMISE FEDERAL LEGISLATION TO SPEED UP ENERGY PROJECTS REGARDLESS OF THE ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES.
SIMILARLY, THE PROPOSED SYNTHETIC FUELS CORPORATION WOULD PROVIDE MASSIVE GRANTS OF TAXPAYERS' DOLLARS TO PRIVATE CORPORATIONS SO THAT THEY COULD BUILD SYNTHETIC FUEL PLANTS.

WE DON'T KNOW VERY MUCH ABOUT SYNTHETIC FUELS. BUT WE DO KNOW THAT THE COST OF SYNTHETIC FUEL IS CONSIDERABLY HIGHER THAN THE COST OF CONVENTIONAL ENERGY, AND THAT MASSIVE TAX-SUPPORTED SUBSIDIES WILL BE REQUIRED.

AND WE KNOW THAT MASSIVE AMOUNTS OF WATER ARE REQUIRED FOR SYNTHETIC FUELS DEVELOPMENT. THE WATER RESOURCES COUNCIL RECENTLY RELEASED A REPORT CONFIRMING THAT WATER WILL HAVE TO BE DIVERTED AWAY FROM AGRICULTURE TO BUILD 37 SYNTHETIC FUEL PLANTS THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY HAS ENVISIONED FOR MONTANA.

FINALLY, MIDWESTERN CONGRESSMEN HAVE SUGGESTED THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD OVERTURN MONTANA'S COAL SEVERANCE TAX WHICH PROVIDES BADLY NEEDED FUNDING TO DEAL WITH THE IMPACTS OF ENERGY DEVELOPMENT.

THE NATION NEEDS TO DEVELOP ENERGY RESOURCES, AND THERE ARE OBVIOUSLY BENEFITS FOR MONTANA.

BUT WE MUST MAINTAIN SAFEGUARDS TO PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT.

WE MUST INSURE THAT MONTANANS PARTICIPATE IN THE BENEFITS OF ENERGY DEVELOPMENT.

AND MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL, WE MUST NOT GIVE UP OUR RIGHT AS MONTANANS TO PARTICIPATE IN ENERGY DEVELOPMENT DECISIONS.
Montana agriculture is a billion dollar industry. Agriculture and agri-business provide a stable economic base and widely dispersed job opportunities that are the cornerstones of Montana's economy.

Agriculture forms the background of almost every Montana community. Agriculture provides jobs not only for farmers, but for grain merchandizers, tractor and fertilizer salesmen, teachers, doctors and lawyers.

Our challenge is to preserve our family farm system. With large numbers of moderately sized locally owned farms, only a viable family farm system will support local communities and provide opportunities for young and beginning farmers.

We need to take a hard look at the tax policies which make farm land a better investment for New York lawyers and German businessmen than Montana farmers. We need to take a hard look at loan policies that help millionaires invest in feed lots, but fail to provide operating assistance for beginning farmers.

We need to take a hard look at federal price support programs that provided $4.4 million for one California farmer in 1978 while the majority of Montana farmers did not participate because of inadequate benefits.

The key to Montana's agricultural growth is exports. Already we are exporting over 60 percent of our wheat.
TO KEEP AGRICULTURE STRONG, WE MUST DEVELOP NEW MARKET OPPORTUNITIES AND FAIR TRADE AGREEMENTS. WE MUST ELIMINATE THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S AUTHORITY TO ARBITRARILY SUSPEND EXPORTS.

WE MUST DEVELOP MORE NATIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS THAT WILL PREVENT THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY FROM EXPORTING SUBSIDIZED WHEAT WHILE REFUSING TO IMPORT UNITED STATES FEED GRAINS.

WE CANNOT TOLERATE THE MAZE OF TRADE BARRIERS THAT JAPAN AND OTHER IMPORTING NATIONS USE TO KEEP OUT AMERICAN BEEF THAT THEIR CITIZENS WANT.

WE MUST IMPROVE OUR TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM. TRANSPORTATION IS THE KEY LINK THAT CAN MAKE MONTANA EITHER A VIABLE PART OF NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMICS--OR JUST A LONELY OUTPOST.

A STRONG TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM IS CHARACTERIZED BY CAPACITY AND COMPETITION. UNFORTUNATELY, MONTANA HAS BEEN LOSING BOTH.

WE MUST CONTINUE OUR EFFORTS TO REVITALIZE MILWAUKEE RAILROAD SERVICE. WE MUST IMPROVE THE BARGE AND HIGHWAY NETWORKS THAT SERVE MONTANA.

I HAVE TALKED FOR SOME TIME ABOUT CHALLENGES MONTANA FACES. I CERTAINLY HAVEN'T OFFERED ALL THE ANSWERS.

THE CHALLENGES ARE TOUGH, BUT THE POINT IS THAT WE MONTANANS CAN SHAPE OUR OWN FUTURE.
Sometimes we are going to have to stand tough against national trends. We are going to have to continually work hard to protect what we believe is right.

I have great faith in the people of Montana. I have great faith in the leaders who have addressed this conference. I have great faith that those of you participating in the conference will be able and involved participants in developing Montana's future.

We will build the future we want. We will build a strong, stable and diverse economy while protecting the natural beauty and solitude that means so much to us.