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"Away From Ideology", Conference on Western Energy and National Resources

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AWAY FROM IDEOLOGY

A SPEECH BY SENATOR MAX BAUCUS

AT A CONFERENCE ON WESTERN ENERGY
& NATURAL RESOURCES

SPONSORED BY THE CENTER
FOR NATIONAL POLICY

APRIL 24, 1982

DENVER, COLORADO
TODAY, I'D LIKE TO TALK ABOUT THE FUTURE, AND HOW WE THINK ABOUT IT.

PRESENTLY, OUR NATION IS REEVALUATING THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT. THE CENTER FOR NATIONAL POLICY IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT. IN THAT EFFORT, WE CERTAINLY NEED BOTH FRESH THOUGHTS AND NEW POLICIES.

WE OFTEN FORGET THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN POLICIES AND GOVERNMENT. POLITICS IS ADVERSARIAL. IT INVOLVES A FREE TRADE IN IDEAS. POLITICAL PARTIES COMPETE IN THE NATIONAL MARKETPLACE. THERE ARE WINNERS AND LOSERS.

GOVERNMENT CANNOT BE DIVORCED FROM POLITICS YET TOO OFTEN WE FALL VICTIM TO ADVERSARIAL THINKING. WE LAPSE INTO THE TERMINOLOGY OF SPORTS, AND EVEN WAR.
THE PRESS TENDS TO ENCOURAGE THIS. THE WORLD IS DIVIDED INTO TEAMS. INSTEAD OF UNIFORMS, WE HAVE LABELS TO IDENTIFY THE PLAYERS. THE TEAMS DO BATTLE. OFTEN WE HAVE A FINAL SCORE. FORM SIMPLIFIES SUBSTANCE.

SO DEMOCRATS AND REPUBLICANS "JOCKEY FOR POSITION". THE PRESIDENT AND CONGRESS "PUT THEIR CARDS ON THE TABLE". THE PENTAGON LAUNCHES A "PREEMPTIVE STRIKE" ON THE DEFENSE BUDGET.

IDEAS MUST FIT INTO THE BOX SCORES. OTHERWISE THEY GET LOST IN THE SHUFFLE. THE DEBATE IS DOMINATED BY NARROW INTEREST GROUPS, OR RIGID IDEOLOGIES. THEOLOGICAL CERTAINTY REPLACES IDEA-BASED GOVERNMENT.
Instead of ideology, we should think of ideas. Ideas that are neither liberal nor conservative, neither monetarist nor marxist. We should think about translating ideas into actions.

Fifteen years ago, a Frenchman wrote a book about American success. He called it the American Challenge. It's relevant today.
HE MARVELED AT THE CREATIVITY OF AMERICAN MANAGEMENT.
HE ENVIED THE EXCELLENCE OF OUR PRODUCTS.
HE ADMired OUR METHODS OF THINKING AHEAD.
HE RESPECTED OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE POWER OF IDEAS.
HE REJOICED IN OUR EXPANSION OF HUMAN POTENTIAL, THROUGH EDUCATION, AND TRAINING.

HE KNEW THAT THE WEALTH OF NATIONS DEPENDED ON THOUGHT, CREATIVITY, AND ACTION.

HE SAID: "MODERN POWER IS BASED ON THE CAPACITY FOR INNOVATION, WHICH IS RESEARCH, AND THE CAPACITY TO TRANSFORM INVENTIONS INTO FINISHED PRODUCTS, WHICH IS TECHNOLOGY."
HE WAS TALKING ABOUT

HUMAN CAPITAL. THE CAPITAL OF IDEAS.
THINKING AHEAD. CREATIVITY. EXCELLENCE.

THESE ARE THE IMPORTANT CONCEPTS IN
TODAY'S WORLD ECONOMY. NEW TECHNOLOGIES ARE EMERGING. FOREIGN COMPETITION IS INCREASING. THE ENERGY CRISIS POSES NEW DANGERS AND NEW OPPORTUNITIES.

THE OLD ANSWERS, THE OLD IDEOLOGIES, JUST WON'T DO. OUR MINDS MUST LOOK AHEAD, AND NOT BE FROZEN IN THE PAST.

I'M TALKING ABOUT ATTITUDE. CALL IT AMERICAN INEGUNITY. CALL IT IDEALISM WITHOUT ILLUSIONS. IT'S A COMMON THREAD IN AMERICAN HISTORY.
TAKE THE MARSHALL PLAN. PRESIDENT TRUMAN HAD LEARNED THE LESSON OF HISTORY. HE UNDERSTOOD THE MISTAKES MADE AFTER WORLD WAR I. HE VOWED IT WOULD NOT HAPPEN AGAIN.

PRESIDENT TRUMAN DECIDED TO REBUILD EUROPE. TO STABILITY THROUGH PROSPERITY. IT WAS A GENEROUS ACT BY A GREAT POWER. IT WAS VISIONARY, AND IT WAS IN OUR NATIONAL INTEREST. IT CHARTED A NEW PATH, AND IT WORKED.
TAKE THE SPACE PROGRAM. PRESIDENT KENNEDY WANTED TO MOVE INTO A NEW FRONTIER. GOVERNMENT, BUSINESS AND LABOR WERE MOBILIZED. RESOURCES WERE ALLOCATED. GOALS WERE DEFINED. NATIONAL PURPOSE WAS RALLIED. BEING AN AMERICAN WAS A STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE. AND PRIDE.

THE CONSTITUTION. THE MARSHALL PLAN. THE SPACE PROGRAM. EACH INVOLVED TRYING SOMETHING NEW—EXPERIMENTING. EACH INVOLVED A POSITIVE, CAN-DO ATTITUDE—CONFIDENCE. INSTEAD OF FINDING REASONS NOT TO ACT, WE ACTED.

THIS IS THE AMERICAN IDEA. THIS IS THE AMERICAN CHALLENGE. THIS IS THE PIONEER SPIRIT THAT BUILT THE COUNTRY. AMERICANS WERE PART OF SOMETHING IMPORTANT, SOMETHING TO CARE ABOUT, SOMETHING WORTHY OF NATIONAL COMMITMENT.
IT'S THIS ATTITUDE, MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE, THAT WE NEED TODAY.

POLITICIANS NEED TO THINK BEYOND THE NEXT ELECTION.

BUSINESS SHOULD THINK BEYOND THE NEXT QUARTER'S PROFITS.

I'M A MEMBER OF THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE. I SIT ON THE TRADE SUBCOMMITTEE. WHERE WE SPEND A LOT OF TIME THINKING ABOUT JAPAN. AND JAPAN SPENDS A LOT OF TIME THINKING ABOUT THE FUTURE. THEY FORCEFULLY PROMOTE NEW TECHNOLOGIES. THEY DEVELOP FOREIGN MARKETS. THEY HUSBAND CAPITAL AND SAVE ENERGY. THEY TRAIN WORKERS.
WE SHOULD DO A LOT MORE OF THESE THINGS.

FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS, AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY USED LITTLE ENERGY—MOSTLY RENEWABLE. FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS, INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY USED MORE ENERGY—MOSTLY NON-RENEWABLE.

TODAY WE STAND AT A CROSSROADS. INFORMATION INDUSTRIES ARE GROWING DRAMATICALLY. ALTERNATIVE ENERGIES ARE BECOMING MORE PRACTICAL. FORESIGHT IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER.

AND FORESIGHT MEANS WE DON'T DEPEND ON MIDDLE EAST STABILITY. WE DON'T CUT CONSERVATION. WE DON'T NEGLECT ALTERNATIVE ENERGIES.
BUT LOOK AT THE PROPOSED 1983 BUDGET:

CONSERVATION RESEARCH: DOWN ALMOST 90%.

CONSERVATION GRANTS: DOWN 98%. THE REMAINING 2% IS TO PHASE OUT THE OTHER PROGRAMS.

CONSERVATION INVOLVES RESEARCH, INVESTMENT, MARKETING AND INCENTIVES. YET RESEARCH AND GRANTS ARE TO BE CUT, AND INCENTIVES ARE UNDER ATTACK.

THIS IS THE WRONG POLICY, REFLECTING THE WRONG ATTITUDE, SENDING THE WRONG MESSAGE.

THE SAME IS TRUE OF ALTERNATIVE ENERGIES. THEY ARE NEEDED, AND THEY ARE COMING. BUT LOOK AGAIN AT THE PROPOSED BUDGET:
TOTAL ENERGY RESEARCH: DOWN ALMOST 75%.

FOSSIL FUELS: DOWN ALMOST 75%.

COAL: DOWN OVER 80%.

RENEWABLE ENERGIES: DOWN ALMOST 75%.

SOLAR RESEARCH: DOWN OVER 70%.

PHOTOVOLTAIC CELLS: DOWN OVER 60%.

WHAT'S LEFT IN THE ENERGY BUDGET?
NUCLEAR POWER. FISSION ALONE WOULD TAKE ALMOST HALF OF THE '83 RESEARCH BUDGET.

THIS BLEND IS UNBALANCED AND UNWISE. IT NEGLECTS CONSERVATION, ALTERNATIVE ENERGIES, AND THE STRATEGIC PETROLEUM RESERVE. IT NEGLECTS THE FUTURE.
NOT ALL NATIONS ARE MOVING IN THIS DIRECTION. JAPAN ISN'T. A GOOD EXAMPLE IS PHOTO-VOLTAICS, A PROMISING NEW TECHNOLOGY.

THREE YEARS AGO WE SPENT TWICE AS MUCH AS JAPAN. THEY HAVE INCREASED THEIR COMMITMENT WHILE WE HAVE REDUCED OURS.

IF THE PROPOSED '83 BUDGET PASSES, JAPAN COULD BE SPENDING TWICE AS MUCH AS WE ARE IN REAL DOLLARS. HISTORY COULD REPEAT ITSELF, AND WE'LL HAVE JAPAN FLOOding US AGAIN.

I DON'T WANT THAT TO HAPPEN. I WANT THE UNITED STATES—NOT JAPAN—TO BE THE SAUDI ARABIA OF NEW ENERGY SOURCES.

BUT AGAIN—WE HAVE TO INVEST. LOOK TO THE FUTURE. THINK AHEAD.
THIS IS TRUE THROUGHOUT THE ECONOMY. WE CAN ACT TO BECOME MORE COMPETITIVE---AND SAVE ENERGY IN THE PROCESS. NEW CARS CAN BE MORE EFFICIENT THAN THE OLDER ONES THEY REPLACE. NEW MACHINERY CAN INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY AND SAVES ENERGY AS WELL.

AND LET'S INVEST IN PEOPLE. NEARLY ONE IN 10 WORKERS IS UNEMPLOYED. BUT MANY INDUSTRIES NEED SKILLED LABOR. WE SHOULD MATCH THE WORKERS TO THE WORK. WE COULD FILL JOBS THAT INDUSTRY NEEDS, AND WORKERS WANT.

WE ARE FALLING SHORT IN THE SCIENCES. JAPAN IS NOW PRODUCING TWICE AS MANY ENGINEERS AS WE ARE, PER CAPITA.

DOCTORATES ARE DOWN. COMPARE THE NUMBER OF DOCTORATES TO THE 1970'S:
PHYSICS AND ASTRONOMY: DOWN OVER 40%.
CHEMISTRY: DOWN OVER 30%.
ENGINEERING: DOWN ALMOST 30%.
MATH AND COMPUTER SCIENCE: DOWN ALMOST 30%.
AND, MANY OF THOSE WHO GRADUATE ARE FOREIGN. THEY RETURN HOME TO COMPETE AGAINST AMERICAN FIRMS.

WE CAN RESTORE EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP. WE CAN GRADUATE THE PEOPLE OUR ECONOMY NEEDS. AND AS WE INVEST IN PEOPLE---WE CONTINUE TO INVEST IN IDEAS. AMERICA SHOULD BE THE RESEARCH CENTER OF THE WORLD. WE STILL ARE, BUT WE CANNOT AFFORD TO RETREAT.

CERTAINLY---WE CAN'T DO EVERYTHING AT ONCE. PROGRAMS COST MONEY, AND MONEY IS LIMITED. WE HAVE TO FIND SAVINGS EVERYWHERE. INCLUDING TAXES. INCLUDING DEFENSE.
But ultimately we return to attitude.

The attitude of business. The wisdom to move away from short-term obsession. The foresight to look ahead. The good sense to invest in the future.

The attitude of labor. The wisdom to avoid seeing management as a mortal enemy---a wisdom, I add---that must be mutual. The foresight to master the new tools of the modern economy.

The attitude of government. The wisdom to move away from rigidity, to know that old answers don't solve new problems. The courage to lead. And the foresight to know where to lead.
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Despite our short term problems, the future holds unlimited potential. My father is a rancher. He is an old fashioned man of the land. I am a lawyer, a public servant, I hope. My son is five years old. What will he become?

Maybe he'll build solar energy houses. Or develop computers that reduce energy waste. Or perform experiments on orbitting satellites.

It is our job to give him the choice. To pioneer new energy sources that he will enjoy. To protect the environment that he will inherit.

What's missing from our national dialogue is a sense of wonder. Scott
FITZGERALD DESCRIBED IT IN THE GREAT GATSBY. HE IMAGINED HOW THE FIRST EXPLORERS FELT WHEN THEY LAID EYES ON AMERICA. THE AWE THEY MUST HAVE FELT, ABOUT THE DANGERS AHEAD, ABOUT THE ADVENTURE THEY HAD BEGUN.

TODAY WE GET LOST IN BUDGETARY DETAILS. WE HAGGLE TOO MUCH.

OUR GENERATION COULD DECIDE WHETHER THE WORLD SURVIVES THE NUCLEAR DANGER. WHETHER CANCER IS CURED. WHETHER ENERGY IS BOUNTIFUL IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE—MORE THAN ENOUGH FOR WONDER.

THE AMERICAN CHALLENGE IS TO RISE ABOVE NARROW THINKING AND TO LOOK AHEAD. IF WE DO, WE CAN ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING. SO'LONG AS WE DO IT TOGETHER, AND DO IT NOW.