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Democratic Response to Presidential Radio Address

Max S. Baucus

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(1) Subject*: **Budget**

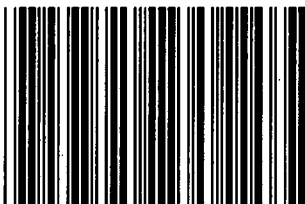
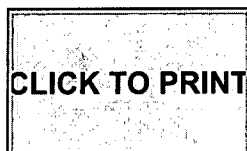
(select subject from controlled vocabulary, if your office has one)

(2) Subject* **Democratic Response to the Presidential Radio Address**

DOCUMENT DATE*: **12/03/1983**

(Example: 01/12/1966)

* "required information"



BAUCUS

DEMOCRATIC RESPONSE OF MAX BAUCUS
TO PRESIDENTIAL RADIO ADDRESS
DECEMBER 3, 1983

I'M SENATOR MAX BAUCUS, SPEAKING FROM BILLINGS, MONTANA.

LIKE MANY MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, I'M BACK IN MY HOME STATE.

I RETURNED HOME DISAPPOINTED, BECAUSE CONGRESS AND THE PRESIDENT HAD NOT AGREED ON A COMPROMISE TO REDUCE THE FEDERAL DEFICIT.

NOW THAT I'M BACK HOME, I FIND THAT MONTANANS ARE DISAPPOINTED TOO.

A REPUBLICAN COUNTY CHAIRMAN TOLD ME: "PEOPLE SAY YOU GUYS BACK THERE HAVEN'T GOT THE GUTS TO DO WHAT HAS TO BE DONE; BUT IT'S GOT TO BE DONE."

A DEMOCRATIC STATE SENATOR TOLD ME: "GETTING DEFICITS DOWN IS THE RESPONSIBLE THING TO DO."

SCORES OF CONVERSATIONS LIKE THESE HAVE CONVINCED ME THAT MOST MONTANANS -- AND MOST AMERICANS -- UNDERSTAND THAT HUGE BUDGET DEFICITS STAND IN THE WAY OF A LONG-TERM ECONOMIC RECOVERY.

THE DEFICIT PROBLEM

THE DEFICITS WE FACE TODAY ARE FUNDAMENTALLY DIFFERENT FROM THOSE WE'VE FACED BEFORE.

THEY DON'T SIMPLY REPRESENT A BAD YEAR. THEY WON'T DISAPPEAR WITH AN UPTURN IN THE ECONOMY.

RATHER, THEY ARE A RESULT OF PROFOUND STRUCTURAL PROBLEMS WITH OUR GOVERNMENT. AND THE LONGER WE WAIT, THE HARDER IT WILL BE TO EVER GET THE DEFICITS UNDER CONTROL.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT JUST CLOSED ITS BOOKS FOR 1983. IT WAS OVERDRAWN--BY ABOUT 200 BILLION DOLLARS.

THAT BRINGS THE TOTAL FEDERAL DEBT TO ABOUT 1.4 TRILLION DOLLARS.

EACH OF YOU LISTENING, AND ALL OTHER AMERICANS, WOULD HAVE TO PAY NEARLY \$6,000 TO PAY OFF THIS ACCUMULATED DEBT.

WHAT'S MORE, THE DEBTS KEEP PILING UP.

AT THE RATE WE'RE GOING, TOTAL FEDERAL DEBT WILL MORE THAN DOUBLE IN THE NEXT SIX YEARS.

o WE JUST CAN'T AFFORD TO KEEP BORROWING THIS WAY.

o SUCH HUGE AND PERSISTENT DEFICITS PUSH UP INTEREST RATES.

O THEY REIGNITE INFLATION.

O THEY DISTORT INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE RATES SO THAT AMERICAN MANUFACTURERS AND FARMERS CAN'T COMPETE IN WORLD MARKETS.

YOU'D THINK THAT GIVEN ALL OF THIS, OUR NATIONAL LEADERS WOULD BE WORKING TOGETHER TO HAMMER OUT A SOLUTION.

BUT THAT'S NOT THE CASE.

THE CURRENT DEADLOCK

A FEW WEEKS AGO, CONGRESS AND THE PRESIDENT GOT BOGGED DOWN IN POLITICAL GAMESMANSHIP.

CONGRESS BLAMED THE PRESIDENT.

AND THE PRESIDENT BLAMES THE CONGRESS.

AND EVERYBODY SUGGESTED THAT WE PAY FOR THE DEFICIT OUT OF SOMEBODY ELSE'S POCKET.

SINCE THEN, THINGS HAVEN'T GOTTEN ANY BETTER. JUST THIS WEEK, DEFENSE SECRETARY WEINBERGER PROPOSED A 22% INCREASE IN DEFENSE SPENDING -- TOTALLY DISREGARDING OUR DEFICIT CRISIS.

AND THE ADMINISTRATION ATTACKED ITS OWN CHIEF ECONOMIST,

MARTIN FELDSTEIN, FOR POINTING OUT HOW SERIOUS THE DEFICIT PROBLEM IS. THEY ARE AFRAID THAT TALK LIKE THAT COULD PREVENT THEM FROM BLAMING THE WHOLE PROBLEM ON CONGRESS.

THE FACT IS WE ALL SHARE THE BLAME.

MORE IMPORTANTLY, WE ALL MUST CONTRIBUTE TO THE SOLUTION.

THE SOLUTION

WE CAN'T REDUCE THE DEFICIT UNLESS WE DO SEVERAL THINGS:

O FIRST, WE MUST MAKE ADDITIONAL CUTS IN DOMESTIC SPENDING AND ENTITLEMENT PROGRAMS;

O SECOND, WE MUST SLOW THE RATE OF GROWTH IN DEFENSE SPENDING;

O THIRD, WE MUST RAISE MORE REVENUE.

O AND FOURTH, WE MUST CLOSE ADDITIONAL TAX LOOPHOLES.

THIS IS STRONG MEDICINE.

AND IT WON'T GO DOWN EASY.

BUT I AM CONVINCED THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WANT US TO PROVIDE THE STRONG LEADERSHIP IT TAKES TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM.

THAT'S WHY I'M PROUD TO HAVE BEEN PART OF THE SENATE FINANCE

COMMITTEE'S RECENT EFFORT TO DRAFT A COMPROMISE DEFICIT REDUCTION PACKAGE THAT WOULD CUT SPENDING AND INCREASE TAXES, IN EQUAL AMOUNTS.

SENATOR ROBERT DOLE OF KANSAS, CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE, SHOULD BE COMMENDED FOR HIS COURAGEOUS LEADERSHIP IN PROMOTING THIS EFFORT.

LIKE ANY COMPROMISE, THIS DRAFT IS NOT PERFECT.

WE NEED TO WORK ON IT AND MAKE SURE IT IS FAIR.

AS WE CONTINUE TO CONSIDER A DEFICIT REDUCTION PACKAGE, WE MUST BE COMPASSIONATE.

WE MUST NOT ASK WORKING MEN AND WOMEN AND THE ELDERLY TO REDUCE THE DEFICIT UNLESS WE ALSO ASK THE RICH, THE CORPORATIONS AND THE MILITARY.

EVERYONE MUST CONTRIBUTE SO THAT IT IS FAIR.

A CALL TO ACTION

IF YOU AGREE WITH ME, I'D LIKE TO MAKE A PERSONAL REQUEST.

SET ASIDE SOME TIME BETWEEN NOW AND NEW YEARS TO CONTACT YOUR SENATORS, YOUR REPRESENTATIVES AND THE PRESIDENT.

WRITE THEM A LETTER OR CALL THEIR OFFICES.

IF THEY'RE BACK HOME, TRY TO MEET WITH THEM.

TELL THEM HOW CONCERNED YOU ARE ABOUT DEFICITS.

TELL THEM YOU WANT THEM TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM.

MOST IMPORTANTLY, TELL THEM YOU ARE WILLING TO STAND BY THEM AND SUPPORT THEM EVEN IF THEY HAVE TO MAKE TOUGH AND PAINFUL CHOICES.

TELL THEM THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE PACKAGE IS A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

CONCLUSION

YOUR PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT IS VITAL.

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

IF ENOUGH OF US SPEAK OUT, WE CAN BREAK THE CURRENT POLITICAL DEADLOCK.

AND PERHAPS THE PRESIDENT AND CONGRESS CAN RETURN BACK TO WORK IN JANUARY WITH A NEW RESOLVE TO ADDRESS THE DEFICIT CRISIS.

THAT IS MY HOPE FOR THE NEW YEAR.

I WANT TO WISH EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU A HAPPY HOLIDAY
SEASON.

AND THANKS FOR LISTENING.