

10-12-1984

Custer County Farm Bureau Candidate's Forum

Max S. Baucus

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Senator * or Department*: **BAUCUS**

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Record Type*: **Speeches & Remarks**

MONTH/YEAR of Records*: **October-1984**

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(1) Subject*: **Agriculture**

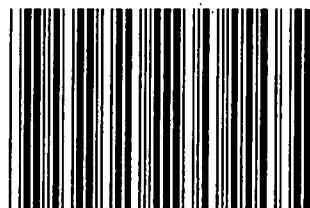
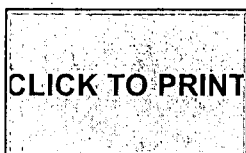
(select subject from controlled vocabulary, if your office has one)

(2) Subject* **Custer County Farm Bureau**

DOCUMENT DATE*: **10/12/1984**

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* "required information"



BAUCUS

STATEMENT OF SENATOR MAX BAUCUS

BEFORE THE

CUSTER COUNTY FARM BUREAU

CANDIDATE'S FORUM

OCTOBER 12, 1984

Thank you. It's a real pleasure to be here with Chuck, Neal and all of you in Miles City.

I wanted to talk to you about where we stand as members of Montana's agricultural community.

I want to talk to you about what we need to do to move Montana's farm economy forward.

I believe we are at a critical point.

Montana's farms and ranches are hurting.

We are at our worst point since the Great Depression.

We are being seriously tested.

- tested by high interest rates
- tested by high budget deficits
- tested by fierce foreign competition

And we are being tested as a people:

- o our basic fabric
- o our fortitude
- o our capacity to put personal differences aside for the common good.

And I would submit to you that our ability to meet the challenges, our ability to pass our current tests, will simply depend on how determined we are to meet the challenge.

INTEREST RATES AND DEFICITS

Nowhere is this more true than when it comes to the issues of interest rates and deficits.

Our federal budget is growing at a rate of \$21 million an hour.

During the ten minutes I speak to you today the deficit will rise by \$3.5 million!

At the rate we're going, total federal debt will more than double in the next six years.

We just can't afford it.

- o Such huge and persistent deficits push up interest rates.

- o They prevent American ranchers and farmers from competing in world markets.

These deficits are the number one challenge to our farm economy.

What's caused this gigantic deficit?

In large part it's caused by a "me first" attitude.

Everyone wants lower deficits but no one is willing to pay the price.

Special interest politics continue to dominate Washington,

And the deficits continue to skyrocket.

So what can we do about it?

How do we break this deficit spending psychology?

The first step is simple:

- o We must make this common problem our highest priority.

- o And we must find a common solution to address it.

THE BUDGET FREEZE

That's precisely what a group of us in the Senate decided to do.

Four of us -- 2 Democrats and 2 Republicans -- joined to propose a one-year budget freeze on all federal spending. That's right -- all federal spending frozen for one year.

Our idea is that the only way to get a handle on the deficit is to ask everybody to participate in the solution.

Under our proposal that's precisely what would happen:

- o The Pentagon is included
- o Social programs are included

- o Every American is included
- o No exceptions
- o No sacred cows
- o No one off limits
- o Every federal spending program included

It sets the right tone of an
across-the-board, even-handed, approach.

Support for it is building too.

Many Senators are joining us:

- o John Melcher
- o Bill Armstrong of Colorado
- o Joe Biden of Delaware and Nancy Kassebaum
of Kansas, just to name a few.

As you can see, we're keeping the bipartisan
spirit of cooperation by including both Democrats
and Republican cosponsors.

Many organizations are joining us as well.

o Your parent organization, the American Farm Bureau, leads the list of sponsors.

Some of the others are:

o The National Grange

o The U.S. Chamber of Commerce

o The National Federation of Independent Businesses

o The National Association of Manufacturers,

o The National Taxpayers Union

Just before the Senate adjourned, those of us who support the spending freeze offered an amendment.

Our amendment put the Senate on record that we want the across-the-board spending freeze to be considered by Congress before there can be any additional increases in the national debt.

I want to assure you that I will continue to fight for the bipartisan spending freeze, and I'm convinced that with hard work, we will enact it.

THE JAPANESE BEEF ISSUE

But as we work to get interest rates and deficits down we also have to work on the other things that stand in the way of a recovery for our state's farm economy.

You all know about the unfair barriers in our trade relationship with Japan.

Our country gives them free access to our markets -- any of us can buy a Toyota in downtown Billings.

But our cattlemen don't enjoy the same access to their markets -- our beef cannot be purchased freely in downtown Tokyo.

Well about a year ago, many of us in Montana realized that unless we organized and fought for a better agreement with Japan, we wouldn't get one.

And Montanans really rolled up their sleeves and joined in the fight:

- o The Montana Beef Industry Council,
- o The Montana Women Involved in Farm

Economics,

- o The Montana Cowbelles,
- o The Montana Farmer's Union,
- o The Montana Cattlemen's Association,
- o and the Montana Stockgrower's Association.

All of them played an instrumental role in our nation's effort to Japan to buy more American
ef:

They all did a magnificent job, and our nation owes them a debt of gratitude for the fight they waged.

Earlier this year the U.S. and Japan entered into a new four-year agreement.

Under the new agreement, the annual increase in imports will double!

That increase will mean an additional \$300 million worth in new sales for American cattlemen.

While the new agreement isn't everything

either I or American cattlemen wanted, the new agreement represents a breakthrough in U.S. -Japanese trade relations.

I hope the beef negotiations will become a model for future negotiations with the Japanese and with others. And I hope we have begun to take a more aggressive approach to all unfair foreign trade barriers.

THE BAUCUS AGRICULTURE RECORD

I am proud of my record on behalf of Montana agriculture.

I grew up on a ranch. I understand the problems of agriculture in Montana.

And I take a great deal of pride in what I've done for Montana farms and ranches.

I am proud of my efforts to open up Japanese markets for American beef.

I am proud of my successful effort to save Beginning Farmers Program.

I am proud of my efforts to enact a one-year

spending freeze.

Based upon this record, I ask you for your support in this election.

YOUR INVOLVEMENT

I also ask you to join me in getting the spending freeze proposal enacted.

You can get the farm bureaus in other states to get their Senators behind the proposal.

We all have a great deal at stake.

If we meet the challenge of reducing these high deficits, I think two things will happen:

o First, lower deficits and lower interest rates will mean greater prosperity for Montana's farms.

o Second, our ability to lick this particular problem means we are more likely to pull together and meet whatever other challenges face in the future.

That's exactly what the leaders of our state

and country need to do:

Set our priorities on our common problems;

And insist on common, shared solutions.

If we do that, we are going to look back at the 1980's as the time when America turned the corner:

- o When it began to pay less attention to individual special interests,

- o When it began to pay more attention to common, shared problems and common, shared solutions.

CONCLUSION

There's a growing mood in this country.

One of renewed patriotism.

You can feel it.

Our job as leaders is to make sure that spirit is channeled into constructive solutions to challenges we face.

That is what I'm trying to do.

I hope you will join me as we work together
to lead Montana forward.

Thank you.