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Congressional Economic Leadership Institute Dinner

Max S. Baucus

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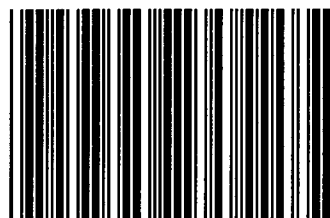
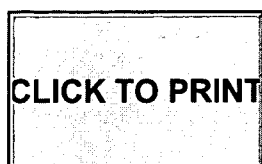
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BAUCUS

Chris

**INTRODUCTION OF THE HONORABLE MAX BAUCUS
SENIOR SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF MONTANA
CONGRESSIONAL ECONOMIC LEADERSHIP
INSTITUTE DINNER
LA COLLINE-- JUNE 29, 1994**

When Ron Pump suggested to me that the Congressional Economic Leadership Institute (CELI) wanted to honor Senator Max Baucus for his constructive work on trade and competitiveness, I was pleased and proud. When Ron suggested that AT&T might *host* the dinner, I was even *more* pleased. When he offered me the opportunity to *introduce* the Senator--who needs no introduction to any of you--I was, frankly, thrilled.

Why would that be? you might ask. Perhaps for the opportunity to sit next to Senator Baucus at dinner? Perhaps for the opportunity to formally and publicly thank the Senator for his farsightedness and leadership on MFN for China, his courageous and masterful handling of the NAFTA debate on the floor of the Senate, or his responsible stewardship of the fragile health and beauty of our environment, as was recently recognized by the Energy and Environmental Studies Institute? My delight could have been for any--and all--of those reasons, but the truth is, it was for another, altogether different reason.

I appreciate this opportunity because I hope I might be able to share with all of you a little bit more about *who Max Baucus is*, and from whence he comes. ..More than you can read in his published biographies--or perhaps hear from his many "inside the beltway" admirers. I start with the assumption that not many of you have been to the ranch where Max grew up. Has any of you been to Helena? ...to Montana? Then for most of you *perhaps* I can contribute something *new* to your appreciation of Senator Baucus.

You may have heard Senator Baucus refer to Montana author Norman Maclean's mesmerizing descriptions of the beauty of the Big Blackfoot River and environs in his book *A River Runs Through It*. What Senator Baucus' modesty may have *prevented* him from mentioning, is that Norman Maclean *talks* about the *Sieben Ranch* (which has been in Max's family for four generations) and Maclean calls it "one of the finest in western Montana, spreading all the way from the Helena valley to Lincoln and beyond." He speaks fondly of Max's parents Jean and John Baucus (p48). *The Big Blackfoot River very nearly runs through the Sieben Ranch!*

My job requires that I witness a few sunsets and sunrises in Montana, as well as Idaho and Wyoming, from time to

time. And so it happened that I was in Montana a couple of weeks ago for meetings in Bozeman, Helena, and the Tribal College at the Blackfeet Reservation east of Glacier National Park. The Sieben Ranch lies about halfway between Glacier to the north and Yellowstone to the south, sprawling magnificent mountains and valleys along the Continental Divide that by their sheer beauty would merit inclusion in either national park.

(You might also be interested to know, by the way, that the paleontology professor in the movie Jurassic Park was patterned after Montana State University's Jack Horner, discoverer of the now famous Maiasaurus egg nests, and curator of the Museum of the Rockies in Bozeman.)

...So anyway, I drove from Bozeman to Helena on a Friday afternoon, and had just sat down to a delicious fresh rainbow trout supper when I read in the (Helena) Independent Record that Senator Baucus was about to give the commencement address at Helena High, his Alma Mater. I wolfed down my dinner, jumped in the car, drove across town in about a minute and a half, and squeezed into the high school gymnasium just as the *current* Senior Class President was introducing Senator Baucus.

I thought it would be really interesting to hear what a three term United States Senator, born in Helena, raised on a

spectacular cattle and sheep ranch a few miles north, senior class president of Helena High in 1960, graduate of Stanford University and Stanford Law, Chair of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works and Chair of the International Trade Subcommittee of Senate Finance, would say to the graduating seniors of his high school alma mater 34 years later.

He talked to them about keeping Montana in their hearts, and about Montana values of hard work, striving for excellence, the call to service--which he called "the most noble human endeavor." He spoke of the need to remain uncompromising in matters of right and wrong, and the usefulness of a valiant and resilient sense of humor. He talked about technology, telecommunications, a shrinking world, global competitiveness, and a future as big as the big Montana sky.

I left before the Senator had shaken the hand of the last graduating senior. But as I started across the parking lot, I saw a burgundy and white van (Helena High Bobcat colors) with the license plate "Lady Max." So I made what seemed like a logical inference, jotted a congratulatory note and slipped it under the windshield wiper. (It turns out Senator Baucus knows nothing of this van!)

The next day I drove out to see his family ranch, 23 miles northeast of Helena, with *its own exit* ("Sieben Ranch") from the Interstate. And while I have already exceeded the appropriate time allowance for an introducer to present such an important guest--if you will indulge me another minute or two, I will tell you what I saw--so that you can know Senator Baucus better--and *what he gives up to be here* in the service of his homeland.

Miles and miles and miles of green mountains and hills--some rolling, some so steep only a bear or mountain sheep or goat could climb straight up, and clear rushing creeks ("cricks" as we say up there) and streams, undoubtedly brimming with trout just *waiting* to rise to a fly.

Ponderosa pines, aspen, cottonwoods, ash, chokecherry, wild raspberry, huckleberry, thimbleberry, meadows filled with wildflowers and fat Angus heifers, frolicking lambs and sheared ewes, more meadows with Hereford cows and calves, triliums, fields yellow with mustard, bluebirds, meadowlarks, a large pasture with 6-8 bulls of different breeds lying around chewing their cuds, two pastures with several well-fed Quarter Horses (literally "knee deep in clover") and three cute and curious bay foals not even two weeks old swinging their short curly tails against the inevitable summer flies.

A tame ring-necked pheasant pair, fancy geese and ducks, acres of huge barns and sheds drying out from a long winter, a gigantic rack of elk antlers over the door to a large log house (one of several), and a late model black F150 Ford pickup truck with Peterbilt mudflaps and the license "Johnny B" in the driveway. (Max tells me that belongs to his nephew, not his late father. ...You all know what Peterbilt mudflaps look like...!)

And sky--lots and lots of big, blue Montana sky. A gentle breeze was blowing and the quiet was punctuated only by the *thrilling* song of a happy meadowlark.

I drove back to Helena for the wedding I was there to attend, and thought about what it might have been like getting Max's expectant mother into town to give birth on December 11, 1941, and wondering if he missed a lot of school like I did in the winter because you couldn't get to town. You see, I grew up on a cattle ranch in the Panhandle of Idaho--*tiny* by comparison , but only a few hundred miles and a Continental Divide away from the Sieben Ranch where Max grew up in Western Montana.

On Sunday on my way north to Glacier, I drove through Lincoln and Wolf Creek to see more of Norman Maclean's country and the Big Blackfoot River. Most of the way I was *on or near* the beautiful Sieben Ranch. Re-read **A**

**River Runs Through It, and better understand *who it is*
that Montanans have sent us to represent them.**

**Ladies and Gentlemen, it is with great pride and gratitude
that I present to you the Senior Senator from the Great
(Big) (Sky) State of Montana, the Honorable Max Baucus.**