

THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary  
(Helena, Montana)  
For Immediate Release September 18, 1989

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT  
AT CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION  
OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

State Capital Grounds  
Helena, Montana

*"One hundred years ago, Montana was a land where men sought the treasure that lay beneath the Earth. Today it's the land itself we treasure — a living legacy we must preserve and pass along."*

1:46 P.M. MDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Governor Stephens. Thank you very much \_ you and Mrs. Stephens \_ for greeting us at the airport. Lieutenant Governor Kolstad, congressional delegation, members of the State Legislature and the Mayor of Helena. Let me say to everyone gathered here and to all the people of Montana that it is a great pleasure for me to be back in this great state. Happy Birthday 100. (Applause.)

And you're certainly celebrating this in style. I have to tell you that I was mightily impressed with that centennial cattle drive. (Applause.) It captured the hearts of America. Nearly 3,000 cattle, 60 miles in six days. Now, maybe I can get a few of those drovers to come back with me to Washington. There's a herd back on Capitol Hill that I'd like to move in my direction. (Laughter.)

You know, this is my first visit to Montana since the campaign and since I started my new job. November 8th was a big day for me in 1988 \_ and I know it's the big day for all Montanans in 1989. And this is my first visit. You know, we've come a long way today from Pennsylvania Avenue, but here I am standing on Capitol Hill — just a mile away from Last Chance Gulch. Maybe I haven't left home after all. (Applause.)

But it's good \_ it's good to be back under the Big Sky. Looking out at the Sleeping Giant, with your historic state-house a marvel of Montana granite, sandstone and copper standing here at our back. And you can feel the history of this great state its land and its people.

And I've heard that there's a five-pound trout waiting for me up in the Bob. (Applause.) And I don't know if you've heard about that horrible fish shortage up in Maine this summer. But anyway, it's not a problem here, since I hear that Montana has 896 catchable fish per square mile. Now I know why I had so much trouble catching a fish up in Kennebunkport. They're all in Montana. (Applause.)

Montana has contributed a great deal in the 100 years since it became a state along with its gold, copper and ore. Montana's given our nation a sense of its own pioneering destiny. And there's something about spaces so vast you can see the curve of the Earth. What encouragement it gives us to see the future as an unlimited horizon.

I spent this morning in the state of South Dakota, which is celebrating its own centennial this year. And you've got a lot in common in this part of the country. A can-do attitude, a faith in hard work, and a straightforward love of nature and the land we live in.

This morning I spoke in Sioux Falls about a common concern of all of ours — the environment \_ about the need to awaken a new spirit of environmentalism across America. And here in Montana I know that spirit exists. This great state was once the scene of an epic battle - man against nature. Too often, the only question that mattered was what man could take from the Earth, not how we left it, or how we put it back.

Well, no more. Times have changed. The conservation ethic runs deep here. In the past two decades, Montana has enacted some of the most advanced environmental statutes in all of the 50 states. The citizens of the Big Sky State understand it's not man against nature - it's man and nature. Montanans have made a decision never to let environmental exploitation go unchecked. We can have a sound ecology and a strong economy, and that is what I am committed to. (Applause.) And so, might I add, is my environmental protector, the head of the Environmental Protection Agency who works at my side, Bill Reilly — and I'm delighted he's here with me today. (Applause.)

The nation and the world can learn from your example. And, believe me, we must learn. The single most signifi-

cant word today in the language of all environmentalists is interdependence. That's a fact all Montanans should find it easy to appreciate. Not so many miles from where we stand is a spot called the Triple Divide, where the waters begin their separate journeys to the Pacific, to the Gulf of Mexico, to the Hudson Bay and the Arctic beyond the Earth's own geography lesson in global interdependence.

The plain fact is this: Pollution can't be contained by lines drawn on a map. The actions we take can have consequences felt the world over. The destruction of the rainforests in Brazil. The ravages of acid rain that threaten not just our country, but our neighbors to the north and not just the east but the lakes and forests of the west as well. The millions of tons of airborne pollutants carried across the continents and the threat of global warming. We know now that protecting the environment is a global issue. The nations of the world must make common cause in defense of our environment. And I promise you this: This nation, the United States of America, will take the lead internationally. (Applause.)

Here in this great state, you're already taking the lead with your commitment to the environment, led by every schoolchild in this state who's planted a Ponderosa Pine to commemorate 100 years of history. In just a few minutes I'll be planting a tree of my own, and let me say from the heart, there's no finer symbol of the love each one of us feels for this land than a tree growing up in Montana's good earth.

We're working hard to clean up America, but we can't stop there. We've got to work with the rest of the world to preserve the planet. We're already taking action. To preserve the ozone layer, we're going to ban all release of CFCs into the atmosphere by the year 2000. To prevent pollution of the world's oceans we're going to end virtually all ocean dumping of sewage and industrial wastes by 1991. (Applause.) And after that, anyone who continues to pollute is going to pay for it with stiff fines. And we're going to join forces with other nations.

In February, the United States will host the plenary meeting of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. In July when I visited Poland and Hungary, I pledged America's help in tackling the increasingly serious pollution problems those two nations face. At the Paris economic summit, we helped the environment achieve the status that it deserves at the top of the agenda for the seven major industrial democracies. And I mean to keep it right there at the top of the agenda. (Applause.)

America spends more than any other nation in the world on environmental research, and we're going to continue this pioneering effort to protect the environment and put that environmental expertise to work in the developing world as well. We cannot pollute today and postpone the cleanup until tomorrow. We have got to make pollution prevention our aim. And sharing our expertise with the world is one way to do exactly that.

Today, I want to announce a new environmental initiative — one that will bring the Environmental Protection Agency and the Peace Corps together in a joint venture in the service of the global environment. Beginning in 1990, as part of their standard preparation for duty, Peace Corps volunteers will be trained by the EPA to deal with the full range of environmental challenges water pollution, prevention, waste disposal, reforestation, pesticide management. Armed with greater knowledge about our environment, our Peace Corps volunteers are going to help spread the word in the developing world. They'll work to stop pollution before it starts and ensure that economic development and environmental stewardship go hand in hand.

And Montanans know more than most how much that means, how vital it is for us to accept our responsibilities, our stewardship the environment in Montana, across America, and around the world. We hold this land in trust for the generations that come after. The air and the Earth are riches we simply cannot squander.

One hundred years ago, Montana was a land where man sought the treasure that lay beneath the Earth. And today it's the land itself we treasure — a living legacy we must preserve and pass along. One hundred years from now, on the bicentennial of this great state, we want our children's great grandchildren to enjoy the natural wonders that abound across Montana today. From a glacier down to Yellowstone and out to the Great Plains — we want to know that 100 years from now the legacy will live on.

To the young people of Montana, we're living in exciting times. I can tell you, as your President, I feel much more confident than at any time since World War II about being able to help bring a more peaceful world to the benefit of all. We're living in historic times, but we must do everything in our power to protect the environment.

Thank you for coming out to give me this warm Montana welcome. God bless you, and may God bless the state of Montana and bring it another 100 years of happiness. Thank you and God bless you all. (Applause.)