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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
15TH ANNUAL AUCTION
OF THE
OREGON MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY
MEMORIAL COLISEUM

8:55 P.M. PST

Thank you very, very much, Bob, for the more than generous introduction, and I think for any of us in political life, that is the one thing we want and cherish. And you have it, and I am proud to be here in Oregon with you on that basis.

You know, I feel very much at home here in Oregon. Our new White House photographer, Dave Kennerly, he comes from Portland, and he keeps me up-to-date on everything that happens out here. Dave, stand up and give us a bow. Oh, there he is. Right over there.

As you all know by now, I am sure -- if you don't know, in Portland there are some down here in the Washington photographic corps who know it -- that Dave is Washington's number one bachelor. (Laughter)

So after this talk for the men, we are going to auction off a special set of Presidential cuff links. For the kids, we are going to auction off two autographed footballs, and for the girls, we are going to auction off Kennerly. (Laughter)

Really, I am terribly pleased to be here. I have heard so much about your Science and Industry Museum. These are certainly two areas where our Nation excels and I think it is only fitting that OMSI should be recognized worldwide as one of the finest museums of science and industry in the whole world.

We Americans have always been a very stubborn lot, so it is, I think, relatively characteristic that in America this fine institution was created by people and it never asked for any tax subsidy, and I congratulate you.

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(OVER)

I am delighted and honored to participate on an occasion like this where you raise your money and you do not come down and see all of us in Washington asking for a little help. I would do this 24 hours a day for all organizations if we could avoid that, believe me.

But any institution that is organized, run and paid for by people in sort of the good, old-fashioned way, the barn-raising method, I think it is great, and to do this here in Oregon, in Portland, I think is sort of characteristic of the wonderful people and the concepts and the principles that you have.

And although I would not suggest seriously that we move this project to Washington, (Laughter) I think Members of Congress could benefit by a visit here, not only by people in Government, but a lot of people outside, in many other parts of our country.

You know they tell me the day we landed a man on the moon, you were already teaching a course here at OMSI about moon topography, and I congratulate you. And I made a speech a few weeks ago about exploring new sources of energy, and I find here at OMSI you already have an exhibit working, actually working models of just about all these new sources of energy, whether it is solar, geothermal, or what have you.

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This is the kind of vision, the kind of imagination that I think is what we need, not only in Portland, but elsewhere. And I am also greatly interested in your latest development here with the cooperation of the Bureau of Standards of an exhibit on how the metric system works.

I am not sure I understand it, but I am glad you are teaching the younger generation because I think it is important as we become more and more integrated in a global sense.

I understand this exhibit is scheduled to travel all over the United States and that in and of itself is a tribute to Portland, and I congratulate you.

Sometimes we think of museums as old, musty, out-of-the-way places, remnants of the dead past. OMSI, as I understand it, is an example of how alive, how useful, how exciting a great museum can be, and I congratulate you for it.

As I look around this room and see some of the younger generation, those in the middle group (laughter) -- and some of us, some of you my age -- I cannot help but think that the people make a State and the people make the country. And actually, Oregon is a symbol of this project and what you do in many other fields, a great State with a proud history, but even more importantly, a promising future.

I am grateful for your invitation and deeply indebted to you for the opportunity to be here. And I especially am grateful for Bob Packwood's kind introduction. Thank you very much.

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(AT 9:05 P.M. PST)