

FOR RELEASE:  
THURSDAY AM'S  
APRIL 29, 1976

Office of the Vice President

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REMARKS OF THE VICE PRESIDENT  
AT THE  
ANNUAL NEPTUNE AWARD DINNER  
WASHINGTON HILTON  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

April 28, 1976

Sixteen years ago -- out in Ohio -- I met a remarkable man. He was an outstanding country editor. He had also served 15 years in state and local offices -- and had never lost an election.

When we met, he was running for the Congress of the United States. I believed in this man -- and it was a privilege to campaign for him. I don't know whether my efforts made any difference. He had never lost an election before anyway -- and he has never lost an election since -- after serving eight terms in Congress.

And, all of us here tonight will agree on one thing, when Charlie Mosher was elected and continuously re-elected to Congress, the winners were not only the people of his Ohio district but all Americans -- for generations to come -- who have benefitted and will continue to benefit from his vision and his actions regarding the potential of the oceans. As he completes his 16-year career in Congress, Charlie Mosher also leaves an outstanding record in education, civil liberties, science and promoting new sources of energy.

But it is his unmatched record in matters involving the oceans, the Great Lakes and America's coastal waterways which brings us all together tonight to pay a deeply deserved tribute to this statesman of the seas. Because of Congressman Mosher's initiatives the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration was created. He is called the Father of NOAA -- and a proud father he can be.

Because of Congressman Mosher's leadership, this Nation wisely adopted a Coastal Zone Management Act. Because of Congressman Mosher's determination to protect the marine environment, we have legislation dealing with ocean dumping.

And thanks to Charlie Mosher, we also have legislation to protect marine mammals, we have the Sea Grant program to help support oceanic education and research, and the International Decade for Oceanographic Exploration has been launched.

These and other accomplishments, along with his ranking positions on the House Science and Technology Committee, and the House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, explain why the American Oceanic Organization has chosen Charlie Mosher unanimously, for its highest tribute.

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Before presenting his award, I would like to make a few observations about this field where Charlie has distinguished himself so brilliantly. As we look back in history, the surface of the seas was mankind's earliest frontier. Today, the depths of the sea have become the most promising next frontier.

As we approach our Nation's third century, we face as a Nation and as members of the human community great demands for more energy, for greater food supplies, for essential minerals and other raw materials. The oceans of the Earth may well hold the solution to fulfilling a major share of these needs. Therefore, I believe that our Nation has a serious responsibility to formulate a comprehensive policy and sound programs to develop the ocean frontier -- with its enormous promise for renewing vital supplies of energy, food and minerals.

There is presently emerging in the United Nations Law of the Sea Conference the concept of economic control by coastal nations of a resource zone extending 200 miles from the coast. For the United States, this coastal territory represents the equivalent of two-thirds of our land mass.

Presently, we do not know enough about this largely unexplored undersea continent. We do know, however that the waters of this zone overlies valuable oil and gas deposits and other mineral resources. They contain the largest and richest fishing areas of any nation in the world. Concern for the future of our people requires us to assess and explore, map and chart this territory. We must find out what is out there, and set about protecting, managing and using wisely its untold resources.

The important point is to develop our sea resources in harmony with nature. Quite obviously, the exploitation of the sea by man has run well ahead of our research into and our understanding of this still mysterious world. In fact, it was the continued depletion of our fishery areas that made necessary the recent passage of legislation extending U. S. fishing rights out to 200 miles.

Research and development of the ocean's resources produce new industries, new products and create a whole new source of vitally needed jobs for Americans. To accomplish these purposes we need a bold new national perception of the ocean -- one which recognizes it as an integral and vital part of our total resources. We must channel our marine science and engineering programs toward full realization of the ocean's potential.

Government should foster an investment climate which will stimulate the establishment of new, sea-based industries. Just look at the possibilities. In 1973, the primary economic value of ocean resources to the United States approached \$8 billion. Current projections estimate a three-fold increase by 1985 and a five-fold increase by the year 2000. This represents a real annual growth rate in excess of 6 per cent. These projections indicate clearly that -- over the next quarter century -- the oceans could provide a great reservoir for the economic growth necessary to fulfill both mankind's hopes and needs in a world of rapidly expanding population. There is no brighter horizon for the U. S. today than the horizon of the oceans -- no greater opportunity -- no more critical challenge.

And few Americans have understood this promise of the sea more fully than the man we honor tonight. No American has done more to promote the twin goals of realizing the sea's tremendous bounty -- while protecting the ocean environment upon which that bounty depends in the future.

It is therefore with the deepest satisfaction that I now present the coveted 1976 Neptune Award of the American Oceanic Organization "For integrity, diligence and foresight in ocean affairs, for leadership in areas vital to the constituency of the ocean community and the nation, for instruction, wise counsel and understanding on the benefits of a national oceans program, in appreciation to a true gentleman of the United States Congress, for a distinguished career of public service" -- to Charles Adams Mosher.

Charlie Mosher has reminded us through his achievements of this elemental truth. Life originated in the ocean. And it is the ocean on which we must continue to depend for the support of life.

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