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OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT
Washington, D. C.

REMARKS OF THE VICE PRESIDENT
BEFORE THE HOUSE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE
2318 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

10:00 A.M. EDT

I want to thank your distinguished Chairman, Congressman Teague, for inviting me to present the Administration's position on the vital subject of scientific and technological expertise in the White House.

Today's meeting is the latest evidence of the outstanding initiative and leadership Congressman Teague has provided in this most important area.

Through his Chairmanship and long membership on the Committee on Science and Technology, Congressman Teague has played a crucial role in the formulation of policies and programs which have sustained America's edge in the sciences and in technology.

I also want to express my admiration for the leading role played on the Committee by your ranking minority member, Congressman Mosher.

And to all the members, I would like to express my opinion that you could not be serving on a committee with greater impact on America's future.

The progress that this country achieves in the months and years ahead will be influenced in no small measure by the work accomplished by this Committee.

America's preeminence in science and technology has long been the key to our strength as a nation and our unsurpassed standard of living as a people.

Through American technology, pure science is converted into industrial growth, a strong defense, better health care, agricultural plenty and expanding opportunity for our people.

As a society, we are dedicated to freedom, equality and justice.

But achievement of these goals depends, in turn, on a society that continues to offer expanding opportunity to all its people.

And providing this opportunity requires that we continue to progress, scientifically and technologically.

I am aware that in some quarters the concept of growth is being questioned today.

But in a nation where so many are rightfully striving to better their lot, for themselves and their families, this no-growth outlook amounts to someone saying, "You can pull up the ladder, now. I'm on board".

This is not the American way. Ours is the land of opportunity.

Throughout our history, whether we look to the cotton gin, the telephone, the internal combustion engine, or the laser beam;

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- we have applied science to the solution of practical problems, to a degree that has made America the strongest and freest nation, while serving the needs of all mankind.

The case for our technical and scientific leadership has surely not abated.

It has grown stronger with the increasing complexity and interdependency of the world in which we live.

A brief look at the problems we face tells us that scientific and technological progress is indispensable.

Energy, the environment, food production, defense developments and disarmament agreements -- just to name a few -- all have a scientific dimension.

We cannot turn away from these challenges.

We must apply our science to their solution in the construction of a better nation and a better world.

And the perpetuation of our scientific leadership must involve the highest level of government policy-making.

The President of the United States must have direct access to the best scientific knowledge and guidance available in this country.

I am delighted with this opportunity to meet with you today to discuss the establishment, by act of Congress, of an Office of Science and Technology Policy in the Executive Office of the President.

Here is a need which we can all agree ought to be met.

Here is an action on which we can be united, whatever our party, whatever branch of government we serve.

We must maintain America's preeminent place in science and technology.

And the creation of an Office of Science and Technology Policy will help the President to keep America first in science.

As you well know, the concept of direct high-level, independent scientific counsel for the President is not new.

This function has been enormously helpful to past Administrations and, in turn, beneficial to the nation.

In 1951, President Truman initiated a Scientific Advisory Committee in the Office of Defense Mobilization which met with the President, from time to time, even though the Office was part of the Department of Defense.

When Sputnik went into orbit in 1957, it became clear that a source of scientific advice was needed directly by the nation's Chief Executive.

President Eisenhower, therefore, transferred the function into the White House, greatly expanded its role and established a Science Adviser to the President.

In 1961, in reorganizing the Executive Branch, President Kennedy created an Office of Science and Technology, under a science adviser, served by a fairly large staff.

Throughout much of the 1960's, the Office of Science and Technology played a vital role in the White House, particularly in the development of space and military policies.

Then, during the late Sixties, a good deal of national attention shifted to social and economic policy-making.

The role expected of an Office of Science and Technology became less clear and the involvement of the Office in White House policy formation declined.

In July of 1973, President Nixon abolished the role of Science Adviser, the OST and the President's Science Advisory Committee.

These functions were transferred to other agencies.

Removal of the science advisory function from the White House was strongly opposed by the scientific community.

Since then, there has been a substantial effort, both by the scientific community and those who recognize the indispensability of science to sound policy planning, to get a science role reestablished in the White House.

The National Academy of Sciences vigorously recommended the creation of a Council on Science and Technology in the President's Office in its report of June 1974.

In December of 1974, the President asked me to examine whether a science advisory organization in the White House would strengthen the Presidential staff mechanism.

After several months of study, I recommended creation of an Office of Science and Technology Policy.

The President approved the recommendation and has proposed appropriate legislation.

I would now like to review for you the principal elements of the Administration's proposal.

II. Function and Organization of the New Office

The proposed legislation would create in the Executive Office of the President an Office of Science and Technology Policy headed by a Director at Executive Level II and a Deputy Director at Executive Level IV.

The Director would be the President's chief policy adviser with respect to scientific and technical matters and would advise the President with respect to:

- A. The scientific and technological aspects of major national policies, programs and issues;
- B. The adequacy and effectiveness of Federal scientific and technological policies, programs, and plans for meeting national goals;
- C. The utilization of new ideas and discoveries in science and technology in addressing important national problems;
- D. The coordination of scientific and technical activities of the Federal government;
- E. And such other matters as the President may direct.

In performing his duties, the Director will work closely with and advise the senior staff in the White House and Executive Office of the President.

The Director will be involved in the review of military as well as civilian scientific and technical programs and work closely with the National Security Council, the Domestic Council and the Office of Management and Budget.

III. Resources for the New Office

The Director and Deputy Director would be assisted by a staff of up to 15 professionals.

The President intends to request appropriations of up to \$1.5 million for support of the organization during its first year.

In addition, the Director of the Office is expected to draw upon the extensive resources available in:

A. the academic, industrial and private research community to obtain expert advice, on an ad hoc basis, on scientific and technological matters of national concern:

B. and in Federal departments and agencies.

The Director would also assume chairmanship of the inter-agency Federal Council for Science and Technology.

I thank Chairman Teague and all the members for this opportunity to discuss with you a vital issue that bears directly on the future progress of this nation and our hopes for fulfilling the rightful aspirations of our people.