

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

THE WHITE HOUSE
PRESS CONFERENCE
OF
JAMES FLETCHER
ADMINISTRATOR OF NASA
JOHN WARNER
ADMINISTRATOR OF THE
BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION
GUYFORD STEVER
ADMINISTRATOR OF THE
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
AND
LEE SCHERER
DIRECTOR OF THE
KENNEDY SPACE CENTER

THE BRIEFING ROOM

12:44 P.M. EST

MR. NESSEN: The President is announcing the Bicentennial Exposition and has been looking over models of and sketches of the Bicentennial Space and Technology exhibits at the Kennedy Space Center at Cape Canaveral.

To respond to your questions for additional details on the exhibition, we have Dr. James Fletcher, who is the Administrator of NASA. We have John Warner, who is the Administrator of the Bicentennial, and we have Guyford Stever, who is the Administrator of the National Science Foundation.

Jim, I think you can start.

MR. FLETCHER: Thank you, Ron.

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

As you know, the President has announced the U.S. Bicentennial Exposition on Science and Technology, to be held at Cape Canaveral starting Memorial Day and ending, presumably, Labor Day.

The President asked NASA to be the lead agency for this as long ago as last October. But, this is a team effort with a large number of the dominant agencies of Government all participating, and we are all working together to try to meet that May 30 deadline.

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Needless to say, we are all enthusiastic about the opportunity to show our wares and to show what this Nation may become in the next 100 years through science and technology.

I think that, looking back 100 years ago, the last 100 years, the telephone was presented at the Philadelphia exposition, the typewriter, electric lamp, and many other developments, and we expect to show similar things at the exposition in Florida.

We have not decided in detail what these innovations will be, but they will be in the fields of energy, medicine, resource utilization, environmental improvements, things like heliographic techniques, and I am willing to explain that, if you like

Micrographic publications, computer graphics, lasers, new automobile engines and all kinds of things are expected to be good candidates for this. We have a meeting scheduled next Wednesday which we call an exhibitor's conference in which we will discuss many of these things, and I think that all in all the American public will be very surprised at the kinds of things that are going on in science and technology in this country.

I must say I think personally that the country owes a great deal of its achievements to science and technology over the last 200 years, and we expect to make the next 100 years equally spectacular.

We call this exhibit, "The quality of life in the next 100 years." I think to show how it ties in with the other agencies we have John Warner, who is Administrator of the Bicentennial Commission, and Guy Stever. We also have Lee Scherer with us, who is Director of the Kennedy Space Center, and we have Jerry Story, who is managing the Washington operation of this whole thing.

But, to speak with you just for a moment is John Warner of the Bicentennial Commission.

Q Could you answer a couple of general questions before we get to details?

MR. FLETCHER: As soon as John gets through, we will do that.

MR. WARNER: I brought with me this morning the computer readout of what is going on across the Nation with the Bicentennial. This is not up to date. It goes out of date every day.

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There are about 1000 projects and events added each week, now numbering over 35,000. But, as I travel across the country -- and I have now concluded visits to 47 States -- there is a restlessness growing in America in connection with the Bicentennial.

People want something that points toward the better quality of life for the third century. They want to lay a cornerstone, something of a permanent edifice as to how the achievements of the Nation can better be shared by all.

I think this exhibit will be that focal point.

MR. FLETCHER: Now we are open for questions for anybody that wants to ask one.

Q What is going to be the cost of the exhibit?

MR. FLETCHER: The total cost will be somewhere between \$7 and \$8 million but, of course, more than half of that will be returned. The initial funding is \$3 million, and that is from the Department of Commerce Economic Development Agency, but we expect to get a good bit of that back, and not only that, the exhibits will be used again and again after the Bicentennial is over.

Q When you get that \$3 million back, will you give it back to Economic Development so it can be used by the areas in this country that need it?

MR. FLETCHER: Actually, the Cocoa Beach area has, I think, something like 17 percent unemployed, so it will be used right away in that depressed area, and that was the reason it was spent, for that purpose.

Q What will the price be to see that?

MR. FLETCHER: We have not decided on the admissions precisely, but we can give you an approximate price.

Mr. Scherer?

MR. SCHERER: It will be \$3.00, \$2.00 and \$1.00. \$3.00 for adults.

MR. FLETCHER: We expect 40 percent of the people attending will be children.

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Q Are you going to be taking exhibits out of the Smithsonian here in Washington and transferring them down there for show?

MR. FLETCHER: No, we will be using Smithsonian artifacts that will not fit in the Air and Space Museum. As you know, all of our artifacts at NASA belong to the Smithsonian, whether they are displayed or not.

Q I am not talking particularly about space. You mentioned lasers and other things. Will you be taking those out of the Smithsonian?

MR. FLETCHER: No, they will be contributed by industry and by the various agencies participating.

Q Go back to the \$3.00, \$2.00 and \$1.00. What was that?

MR. FLETCHER: \$2.00 for youth fare and \$1.00 for children.

Q Dr. Fletcher, is there any work going on in the VAB now and will people who attend this exhibit be able to see some actual space activity in preparation for the show?

MR. FLETCHER: There is considerable work going on in the VAB right now. We will have to rope off the portions of it that will allow the visitors to be involved in it. They will see plenty because, as you know, it is a huge edifice, and they will see some of the work that is going on, but mostly what they will see is stored pieces of Apollo and Saturn hardware.

Do you want to elaborate on that?

MR. SCHERER: Most of the modifications are for the shuttle, so it will not be particularly interesting, but they can see how we are changing from the Saturn V to the shuttle in the VAB itself, and the shuttle hangar is being constructed next door to the vertical assembly.

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Q I don't understand what is going to happen after Labor Day with these exhibits? You say it is going to be ongoing. It is going to be like a cornerstone for the future. Are you going to move them around?

MR. FLETCHER: The domes themselves are rented and they will go back to the people we leased them from. The exhibits, of course, belong to either industry or to another Government agency or to universities, in the case of Dr. Stever. And they will all be returned to the agencies that produced them in the first place.

MR. STEVER: They will be available for other exhibits that take place, not the same combination, but they will be very useful over a long period of time.

Q This sounds very similar to this new project Disney World has going on showing the various aspects of new technology. Is there any connection there? Have you been in contact with them at all? Will any of these exhibits maybe be copied and brought over to them?

MR. FLETCHER: We are in very close contact with Disney World, which is only an hour and a half drive from the Kennedy Space Center, and we are coordinating whatever we do in the way of advance technology with what they do.

I think the difference will be that ours will not have the, shall we say, the fanciful exhibits, but will be real honest technology that is expected to be used, and it will be Government sponsored. This is a federally sponsored exposition.

Q Will you explain to us how you plan on pumping \$3 million back into the economy of the Cocoa Beach area?

MR. FLETCHER: The \$3 million primarily goes toward construction projects. In fact, I think all of it goes through construction in the Cape Kennedy area.

Q This is the revenues derived from charging people \$3.00 to get in? Is that what you are talking about?

MR. FLETCHER: No, the \$3 million is -- I have forgotten the exact title -- economic development fund. It is front-end money. The money that comes from the visitors will only pay for the expenses, the maintenance, operation and expenses of the exposition itself.

Q You mean the economic development money that you are going to leave in the Cocoa Beach area is going to be used in construction?

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MR. FLETCHER: The economic development money, I think -- Lee, you correct me if I am wrong -- is 100 percent used for construction. Is that right?

MR. SCHERER: Yes, sir. Just about. We are assembling the Saturn V with the saddles and so forth so it can't all be called completely construction. Just about.

MR. FLETCHER: Construction and assembly.

Q Is this to be permanent then?

MR. FLETCHER: No, not all of it will be permanent. Some of it will be permanent, but most of it will be moved after the Bicentennial is over.

Q How many city blocks -- in comparison to a city, how big is this?

MR. FLETCHER: The whole exhibit would be 30 or 35 acres, somewhere in there. I have forgotten how big a city block is, but it is about one city block.

Q May we have a list of the exhibitors pretty soon?

MR. FLETCHER: I expect you have one in your press kit.

Q Will there be launchings going on at the time that this exhibit is on?

MR. FLETCHER: Yes, there will be launchings. It is going to be accidental whether people are there for the launchings, but there will be, during this period, typically four or five launchings. We don't know in advance, this far in advance, what days they will be.

Q Like one a month, basically?

MR. FLETCHER: No, it will be more like almost two a month during this period.

Q What kind of launchings? Where are they going?

MR. FLETCHER: These will be launchings, largely, for television satellites, believe it or not -- media satellites. But there will also be scientific satellites. We have a number of foreign launches. But I would say more than half or about half of them are what we call communications satellites.

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Q Did you say before that the high unemployment in the Cocoa Beach area had something to do with deciding to locate it there?

MR. FLETCHER: No, that was not the reason we decided to locate it there, but that was the reason we used the economic development fund from the Department of Commerce, because it was a depressed area. The reason for locating it there is partly because of the public focus on the Space Center during the Apollo launches and also because it is just a delightful place to be with wildlife and a large number of visitors every year.

A million and a half visitors, for example, last year went to the Kennedy Space Center.

Q Do you expect to have the final landing on Jupiter and Venus?

MR. FLETCHER: One of the events that will occur while this exposition is going on is the landing on Mars on July 4th and we don't know exactly how that will relate to the exposition but you can take it from me it will relate. We will have a model of the Viking Lander on display in the Vehicle Assembly Building, but what additional relationship it has we still have not decided yet.

Q Is all of this taking place at the Kennedy Space Center or are you doing anything in Houston or Pasadena?

MR. FLETCHER: All of the places the visitors will be will be at the Kennedy Space Center. We will have communication lines to other exhibits throughout the country. And one of the things that will be displayed is a data system which will be able to integrate all the other Bicentennial expositions -- John Warner can probably explain that better -- so that people can go there and relate back to their home communities and know what is happening in their communities on the Bicentennial celebration.

MR. WARNER: We have a vast computer network which is reflected in this volume in which you can go in and dial your hometown and find out exactly what is going to take place there during the course of the Bicentennial. It records all the events in the program. It is primarily designed to assist Mr. and Mrs. America as they travel about during the Bicentennial period. One of the terminals we put there is for the purpose of the exhibit.

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Q Could I ask Mr. Fletcher again on this economic thing, are you telling us you applied for economic development funds on the grounds of Cocoa Beach being a high unemployment area and are using this money to build a park, a fair, is that what you are telling us?

MR. FLETCHER: No. Just the facilities; the construction and assembly. We expect to get part of that money back. The total is between \$7 million and \$8 million. So all of that other money comes from the exhibits themselves.

Q Is that from the Treasury Department, the Department of Interior?

MR. FLETCHER: The Department of Commerce.

Q The difference between your \$3 million and the \$7 million to \$8 million --

MR. FLETCHER: Is from all these other agencies.

Q It comes from other Federal agencies?

MR. FLETCHER: NSF, EPA, Department of Interior, Department of Commerce, Department of Agriculture, ERDA, and we can go on.

MR. SEVER: I think you should mention that in the handout it mentions all the participating Government agencies, but we hope to have many industries as well, and some of them have already begun.

Q I don't understand as to what wonderful things this is going to do in the long run for Cocoa Beach. It is a three-month shot in the arm, is basically what it is.

MR. FLETCHER: It will be a three-month period which will help Cocoa Beach, but also between the time it started in October and Memorial Day people will be employed in the construction of these projects.

Q Do you know how many people were employed for this?

MR. SCHERER: I don't have the right number. 500 or so, I suspect.

Q Don't you think there is a possibility of this being extended and maybe made permanent?

MR. FLETCHER: Some aspects of it will be made permanent. Lee could probably tell you which.

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MR. SCHERER: Saturn 5 is the prime thing.

MR. FLETCHER: Saturn 5 will be permanently located in that position.

Q It takes several days to go through Disney World, how long will it take to go through this?

MR. FLETCHER: I think it will vary according to the family, but we think a family could go through this part of it that is displayed here in one day, but then normally what people do is they spend an extra day touring the Cape Canaveral facilities, seeing the launch pads and we have a museum and a visitors center and so forth. The chances are they will spend two days.

Q Are there enough facilities there for families who don't have to pay \$50 a day for room?

MR. FLETCHER: That is correct. There are a number of visitors that go through there now with their families. It was one million and a half last year and there are lots of motel facilities and also campsite facilities.

Q Mr. Fletcher, I am sorry. I came in late, if you said so earlier. Do you have any idea how many people you expect?

MR. FLETCHER: We have an idea but the estimates vary. We think a minimum of 800,000 visitors.

Q That is over and above the million and one half?

MR. FLETCHER: No, that is all together. The million and one half is in a year. We are talking about 100 days from May until September and we expect a minimum of 800,000 during that three-month period. Estimates have run as high as 2.6 million. So there is some uncertainty still on the number of people. We will have to provide facilities, of course, for the larger number.

Q How about the access routes? Are there any possible problems coming up with just too many cars on too few roads?

MR. FLETCHER: There are very big problems in handling the traffic, but we have done this before. We have handled a million visitors in one day during the Apollo launches so we do know how to handle large numbers of cars. The situation has improved a great deal in the last two years in the Cape Canaveral area, so we see no problem at all on a normal day.

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There may be a little problem on the special events days. There will be a number of special events, air shows and things of that sort. But we think we know how to handle that large increase in visitors.

Q The thing that has impressed most of the countries of the world is the fact that we walked on the moon and what happened to all the moon rocks? We have given them all away. Will any be shown there?

MR. FLETCHER: That is a good suggestion. I think we do plan to exhibit some of the lunar material, moon rocks, at this exposition.

Q Will this replace or be in addition to the bus tours you have now?

MR. FLETCHER: There will be bus tours that will continue to other parts of the Kennedy Space Center. It is a very large Center, as you know, and also a wildlife preserve. That will be separate, however, from the exposition because the exposition is to represent all of technology, not just space technology, so we want a special focus on what is happening to the individual in the 100 years to come.

Q The exhibition building that you have there now, will that become part of this larger thing or will that be closed down?

MR. FLETCHER: You mean the Visitors Information Center?

Q Yes.

MR. FLETCHER: That will be part of the other tour. The regular tour will start at the Visitors Information Center. This will be quite separate.

THE PRESS: Thank you very much.

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(AT 1:03 P.M. EST)