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Record Group/Collection: George H.W. Bush Presidential Records
Collection/Office of Origin: Speechwriting, White House Office of
Series: Speech File Draft Files
Subseries: Chron Files, 1989-1993

OA/ID Number: 13523
Folder ID Number: 13523-012

Folder Title:
Alternate Fuel Demonstration (Talking Points). 3/13/90 [OA 4728]

Stack:	Row:	Section:	Shelf:	Position:
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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

March 13, 1990

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT ALTERNATE FUEL DEMONSTRATION

Sunoco Station
Southeast Washington, D.C.

2:15 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Obviously the reason we're here today is to show the interest we all have -- industry, the administration -- in cleaner air. There's no question about that, and that's why I came over here today. This is the first commercial availability of methanol in the Washington area.

I want to commend the Sun Company for taking this leadership role in helping our national efforts to reduce air pollution. And I want to thank Mr. McClements himself, the Chairman, for being with us, and I would salute not only him but Ray Poling of the Ford Company, who has taken out his busy schedule to be with us here today, explain how all of this works in an automobile. I want to thank Chuck Imbrecht and Bob Hahn, the co-chairmen of the Alternate Fuels Council, for being with us.

The clean air legislation that I proposed last year is going to go a long way toward achieving our environmental goals. And a fundamental part of this, an integral part of this program is the Clean Fuels Program. We're working hard, and I want to, again, thank both sides of the aisle in Congress, in a bipartisan way, to enact the legislation. The Senate leadership and I, along with our top officials here, Henson Moore of the Energy Department and Jim Watkins, the Secretary, Bill Reilly of EPA, John Sununu and others have all agreed with us on goals and on methods that will achieve our plan.

And a variety of clean fuels, no question, can help to reduce urban smog and toxic air emissions. This, in turn, is going to reduce the regulatory burden on a wide range of small businesses out there. The availability of methanol in a metropolitan area, say, like Washington, is an important step toward the widespread use of clean fuels. There are other -- a few clean fuels in addition to methanol. Click off a couple -- natural gas, propane, ethanol, reformulated gasoline and then electricity. The flexible fuel vehicle that we see here today, one of Red's cars -- a Ford Victoria -- is a government fleet vehicle. By using alternative fuel vehicles, the federal government is trying to lead by example.

And at this time, I again want to thank both our CEOs that were here with us today. Under the direction of the Interagency Commission on Alternative Fuels that is chaired -- Henson Moore chairs that, the Deputy Secretary of Energy -- we're moving forward to bring more alternative fueled vehicles into our fleet. The Interagency Commission and its advisory body, the U.S. Alternative Fuels Council, have an important job in helping develop a national alternative fuels policy.

This is a part of our overall answer to those who worry about cleaning up the environment, as we do. It's a step; it's not the cure-all and the end-all. But I want to congratulate industry -- in this instance, the Saab Company, Ford Motor Company -- for showing fine leadership. And we will keep working with the Congress to accomplish this first major revision in the Clean Air Act since it was first written. It's sound for all of our country. And I'm

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delighted with the bipartisan support we've been getting. So thank you all. (Applause.)

Q Mr. President, haven't you already backed off the requirements for alternative fuel vehicles?

THE PRESIDENT: You know, I've discovered something. Nobody ever does it exactly the way I want it done. But what we have is a sound, strong, environmentally secure compromise that has the support of the best environmentalists I know of. And we're never going to placate those on the extreme side of the equation that want to do nothing, or want to just shut down this country and throw every American that's got a job out of work. We've come to a good compromise, a strong compromise.

And so yes, I can fine tune it, gripe about one phrase and one section or another, but I'm not going to do that. And I'm encouraging our Senators -- both sides -- to get behind this and move it out and then get prompt action in the House.

Q But you've already thrown in the towel on a million alternative vehicles.

THE PRESIDENT: We've thrown it in and we're doing well, and people who take a look at it know that we've got a good sound bill that's going to help clean up the environment. First -- biggest breakthrough since the Clean Air Act was written. And it isn't one that's going to throw America out of work. So, don't worry about that. Don't listen to the extremes on this question. Okay.

END

2:25 P.M. EST

Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters at an Alternative Fuel Demonstration

March 13, 1990

The President. Obviously, the reason we're here today is to show the interest we all have—industry, the administration—in cleaner air. There's no question about that, and that's why I came over here today. This is the first commercial availability of methanol in the Washington area. I want to commend the Sun Company for taking this leadership role in helping our national efforts to reduce air pollution. And I want to thank Mr. McClements himself, the chairman, for being with us; and I would salute not only him but Ray Poling of the Ford Company, who has taken time out of his busy schedule to be with us here today, explain how all of this works in an automobile. I want to thank Chuck Imbrecht and Bob Hahn, the cochairmen of the Alternate Fuels Council, for being with us.

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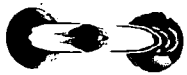
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Q. Mr. President, haven't you already backed off the requirements for alternative fuel vehicles?

The President. You know, I've discovered something: Nobody ever does it exactly the way I want it done. But what we have is sound, strong, environmentally secure compromise that has the support of the best environmentalists I know of. And we're never going to placate those on the extreme side of the equation that want to do nothing or want to just shut down this country and throw every American that's got a job out of work. We've come to a good compromise, a strong compromise. And so, yes, I can fine-tune it, gripe about one phrase and one section or another, but I'm not going to do that. And I'm encouraging our Senators—both sides—to get behind this and move it out and then prompt action in the House.

Q. But you've already thrown in the towel on a million alternative vehicles.

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Mar. 13 / Administration of George Bush, 1990

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Note: The President spoke at 2:15 p.m. at a Sunoco station in Washington, DC. In his remarks, he referred to Harold A. Poling, chairman and chief executive officer of Ford Motor Co.

**Letter to the Speaker of the House
and the President of the Senate
Transmitting the Annual Report of the
United States Arms Control and
Disarmament Agency**

March 13, 1990

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President.)

Effective and verifiable arms control treaties are important to the security of the United States and, as President Gorbachev made clear at our Malta meeting, to the Soviet Union as well. Over the past year we have undertaken new initiatives and made steady and substantial progress in our Strategic Arms Reduction Talks, Conventional Forces in Europe, Nuclear Testing, and Chemical Weapons negotiations. These steps can make a lasting contribution to a safer and more secure world for all mankind.

Because of the role of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA) in support of these negotiations as well as in other crucial arms control activities, I encourage all members of the Congress to read the attached 1989 annual report. The report reviews the year's arms control initiatives and negotiating efforts, as well as the activities conducted pursuant to the statutory requirements of the Arms Control and Disarmament Act, as amended.

Sincerely,

George Bush

Note: Identical letters were sent to Thomas S. Foley, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Dan Quayle, President of the Senate.

**Message on the Observance of
St. Patrick's Day, 1990**
March 13, 1990

I am delighted to extend warm greetings to all those celebrating St. Patrick's Day.

As history tells us, St. Patrick led a life filled with exciting adventures and tremendous challenges. Born the son of a British city leader, he was captured by pirates as a youth and sold into slavery. After gaining his freedom, Patrick returned home, where he eventually decided to dedicate his life to God as a cleric. Soon he was to discover that God was calling him to take part in yet another extraordinary adventure—bringing the Christian faith to the people of Ireland. He spent the remaining years of his life serving God and his fellowman with tireless devotion. In so doing, he helped change forever the course of Irish history. St. Patrick's faith, courage, and compassionate spirit have lived on through the centuries, inspiring generations of men and women to follow his example of voluntary service and fervent prayer.

On St. Patrick's Day, Irish-Americans—indeed Americans of every ethnic background—happily join with the people of Ireland in celebrating the life of this remarkable man. This occasion also provides us with a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the many contributions the sons and daughters of Ireland have made to our nation. Many of those early pioneers who braved the stormy Atlantic to seek a new life in America were of Irish descent. They, like their spiritual ancestor, Patrick, helped to build a strong and proud nation through faith and hard work. On this day we also celebrate the special friendship the United States shares with Ireland—one we look forward to enriching and strengthening in the months and years to come.

Barbara joins me in sending our best wishes to all for a joyous and memorable St. Patrick's Day. May God bless you.

George Bush