

REMARKS OF SENATOR JOHN HEINZ

OPERATION SUN POWER

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

MAY 31, 1979

I AM VERY PLEASED TO BE HERE THIS AFTERNOON TO LAUNCH THE MIDDLE ATLANTIC PHASE OF "OPERATION SUNPOWER" AND TO CONVEY THE URGENT NEED TO "SAVE OIL WITH SOLAR."

WE IN THE NORTHEAST ARE HEAVILY DEPENDENT ON OIL, AND ESPECIALLY FOREIGN OIL, FOR MOST OF OUR ENERGY NEEDS. WE ARE ALL TOO AWARE HOW RAPIDLY OIL PRICES ARE RISING. BY NEXT FALL THE COST OF HOME HEATING OIL COULD BE DOUBLE WHAT IT WAS LAST FALL. THIS WILL STRETCH MANY HOUSEHOLD BUDGETS TO THE BREAKING POINT.

THE QUESTION OF SUPPLY IS EQUALLY BLEAK. RECENTLY THE GASOLINE CRUNCH HAS DOMINATED THE NEWS. BUT LESS ATTENTION HAS BEEN PAID TO THE UPCOMING CRUNCH IN HEATING OIL SUPPLIES. NATIONAL STOCKS OF HEATING OIL ARE MORE THAN 20 MILLION BARRELS SHORT OF THE AMOUNT NORMALLY ON HAND BY THIS TIME OF YEAR.

I NEED HARDLY REMIND THIS AUDIENCE THAT JUST TWO MONTHS AGO PENNSYLVANIA UNDERWENT A VERY DIFFERENT KIND OF ENERGY CRISIS, ONE WHICH THREATENED THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF SEVERAL HUNDRED THOUSAND PEOPLE. THE NEAR DISASTER AT THREE MILE ISLAND AWAKENED US TO THE FACT THAT WE CANNOT COUNT ON NUCLEAR-GENERATED ELECTRICITY TO REPLACE OIL AS A MEANS OF HEATING OUR HOMES AND BUSINESSES.

IT IS OF CRITICAL IMPORTANCE, THEN, THAT WE MAKE A CONCERTED EFFORT, AS "OPERATION SUNPOWER" SEEKS TO DO, TO REDUCE OUR DEPENDENCE ON OIL AND NUCLEAR POWER. HOW APPROPRIATE IT IS THAT WE ARE MEETING HERE TO DISCUSS SOLAR ENERGY BENEATH THE GAZE OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, WHO MORE THAN ANY OTHER AMERICAN IN OUR HISTORY PERHAPS BEST SYMBOLIZES OUR SPIRIT OF INVENTIVENESS AND SELF-RELIANCE. IT IS THAT SPIRIT WHICH MUST MOTIVATE US TO TAP THE PWOER OF THE SUN, AS BEN'S KITE TAPPED THE POWER OF LIGHTNING.

FRANKLIN WAS NOT ONLY A MAN OF SCIENCE, BUT ALSO THE PUBLISHER OF "POOR RICHARD'S ALMANAC." NOTHING BETTER EXEMPLIFIES THE MEANING OF HIS FAMOUS HOMILY, "A STITCH IN TIME SAVES NINE," THAN DOES THE USE OF SOLAR ENERGY. AS OF TODAY IT IT TIME TO TAKE A STITCH, IT IS TIME TO LOOK TO SOLAR ENERGY -- A SOLAR HOT WATER HEATER INSTALLED TODAY WILL REAP SUBSTANTIAL SAVINGS FOR ITS OWNER OVER THE YEARS TO COME, AND WILL ALSO PROVIDE A SECURE SUPPLY OF HOT WATER WHEN SUPPLIES OF OIL OR ELECTRICITY ARE THREATENED.

AS YOU HAVE HEARD, THE COMBINED EFFECTS OF FEDERAL TAX CREDITS AND THE \$400 HUD GRANTS AVAILABLE FROM STATE ENERGY OFFICES WILL REDUCE THE COST OF A SOLAR WATER HEATER BY SOME 40%, FROM ABOUT \$2500 TO UNDER \$1500. BUT AS A MEMBER OF THE SENATE BANKING COMMITTEE, I AM CONCERNED WITH A RELATED ISSUE. HOW DOES A CONSUMER FINANCE THE PURCHASE OF THAT SYSTEM, IF HE DOES NOT HAVE THE CASH IN HAND?

I AM NOT CONVINCED THAT A FEDERAL LOAN PROGRAM IS THE BEST ANSWER. IT IS CERTAINLY NOT AN IMMEDIATE ANSWER. I BELIEVE THAT THE PRIVATE SECTOR CAN AND MUST PLAY A ROLE, IN COOPERATION WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, IN MAKING THE NECESSARY FINANCING AVAILABLE TO SOLAR CONSUMERS. I THEREFORE CALL ON FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS, BANKS, SAVINGS AND LOANS, AND OTHERS IN PENNSYLVANIA, NEW JERSEY, AND INDEED AROUND THE NATION TO PARTICIPATE IN MARKETING SOLAR ENERGY, TO DEVELOP INNOVATIVE LOAN PROGRAMS WHICH WILL ENABLE AMERICANS TO TURN TO THE SUN FOR THEIR ENERGY SUPPLY.

CONVENTIONAL SHORT-TERM HOME IMPROVEMENT LOANS ARE INADEQUATE FOR THIS PURPOSE. WHAT IS NEEDED ARE LONGER-TERM, LOWER-COST LOANS, BECAUSE SOLAR ENERGY IS VITAL TO OUR FUTURE ENERGY SUPPLY, I PLEDGE TO WORK WITH THE FINANCIAL COMMUNITY TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT APPROPRIATE FINANCING MECHANISM TO ENABLE CONSUMERS TO "GO SOLAR." I URGE THE FINANCIAL COMMUNITY TO JOIN ME IN THAT EFFORT.

THANK YOU.