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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 77th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

"Jim Farley Still Idol of the Public"

ARTICLE

FROM THE

KNICKERBOCKER NEWS

May 23, 1941

Mr. CHANDLER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the Appendix of the RECORD an article published in the Knickerbocker News, of Albany, N. Y., of date Friday, May 23, 1941, entitled "Jim Farley Still Idol of Public," with which I agree.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Knickerbocker News, Albany, N. Y., of May 23, 1941]

JIM FARLEY STILL IDOL OF PUBLIC

(By Don Whitehead)

NEW YORK.—There is no privacy for Private Citizen James A. Farley.

Although he has been out of the national limelight for 8 months, the big fellow has about as much chance for obscurity as a movie idol on Broadway.

He's reveling in his role as a big businessman and enjoying his new freedom from the pressure of 8 terrific years as Democratic national chairman and Postmaster General.

He has no regrets, he says, over climbing outside the ropes of the political arena, while his family is delighted to have him once again as a more or less stable member of the household instead of a once-in-awhile visitor between hops about the country at the rate of 50,000 miles a year.

But, nevertheless, Jim Farley still belongs to the people, and his office would look like a convention hall today if all those trying to see him were permitted past a cute blonde reception girl and his efficient secretary.

They shield him from a horde of callers—job hunters, fellows who met "Good Old Jim" at a political rally back in Podunk Center, publicity seekers, panhandlers, and scores of others who have no legitimate reason for a call.

Even then he receives dozens of callers—businessmen, politicians, prize fighters, baseball players, and just plain folks. He carries on a tremendous personal correspondence with his political friends in every State in the Union who continue to keep him advised on the national situation.

He couldn't entirely shake loose from his political bonds if he wanted to, because of the close personal ties he formed throughout the years as ringmaster of the Democratic political circus.

But those years in Washington—beating the Roosevelt drum, keeping a finger on the Nation's voting pulse, ironing out intraparty strife, and flying across the continent just to make a speech at a post-office dedication—gave him a financial beating.

Now he's trying to recoup his losses.

Those with an appointment to see Farley these days are told by the blond receptionist to have a seat, please, and Mr. Farley will see you in a few minutes.

Then a door opens and there is private citizen Farley with his hand outstretched and a broad smile on his face as though an old friend had dropped in for a chat, when perhaps he never saw the visitor before.

He looks as fit as a fighter in training, and if the years in Washington maelstrom left any mark on his honest Irish face, there isn't a trace of it.

Only his surroundings seem strange. He moves a great deal in the plush-carpet quiet of big business as president of the Coca-Cola Export Corporation and president of the Coca-Cola Bottling Co. of Boston.

Soft-voiced aides move in and out of his office. Muffled typewriters barely can be heard, and buzzers buzz discreetly in the distance.

That's the picture of genial Jim Farley that his multitude of friends in every congressional district in the Nation hasn't seen. They know Jim Farley as the center of milling, sweating, loud-voiced meetings of politicians in hotel rooms blue with cigar smoke, where political campaigns were mapped and elections won.

It probably is inconceivable to them that he has no political ambitions and is happy in his new businessman role, but that's what he says.

"I have no plans to return to politics," Farley said in an interview. "I have no political ambitions. I'm more concerned now with the well-being of our country and the hope

that we come through without getting involved in this war.

"And, too, I can't afford political ambitions."

There's talk, of course, that Farley be drafted to run as mayor of the city of New York or as Governor of the State. Many believe he could be elected to either position if he took off his coat and went to work for one of them.

Farley isn't interested in either the power or the glory, his friends say, declaring his 8 years in Washington left him with debts of more than \$50,000 and the annual salaries of mayor and Governor (\$25,000) would not permit him to make up these losses because of outside expense involved in holding such a position.

There's a possibility Farley could be lured back into the national political ring by the assurance of nomination as President or Vice President.

But he declines to discuss these speculations, just as he avoids any talk of his rift with President Roosevelt over the third-term nomination at Chicago last year. His political activity is confined to his work as chairman of the New York State Democratic Committee.

Despite this "retirement," Farley can't step outside his office that he isn't stopped by a mail carrier or an old friend for a chat. There's a constant demand for his services in civic work—which he gives generously. At present he's chairman of the greater New York fund campaign to raise money for charity.

"Actually, I don't think the return to private life has meant much change for me,"

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he laughs, "except I get to be with my family more often. I've been with them more during the last 8 months than I was during the entire 8 years in Washington."

There's the same round of conferences, meetings, rallies, speeches—except they aren't political.

It's no secret that Farley's greatest ambition at present is to get control of the New York Yankee baseball chain. He heads a syndicate which still is dickering for the American League property with executors of the estate of Col. Jacob Ruppert.

Farley always has been a Yankee fan and a baseball addict ever since he played first base as a youth on the village team at Grassy Point, where he was born May 30, 1880, the son of a brick manufacturer.

Sports have been his hobby and from 1925 to 1933 he was New York boxing commissioner. He still can be found at a ringside or at the Yankee ball park whenever he can find the time.

His greatest baseball hero was Babe Ruth, and there's a possibility if he can get control of the Yankees, he will try to bring the Bambino back to the game. The team of Farley and Ruth would be a potent combination in the national pastime.

Whether it's business, politics, civic work, sports or the general run-of-mine office calls, Farley still packs more activity into one day than almost any other individual on Manhattan Island.

"The days would have to be 60 hours long for the boss to meet all the demands on his time," a secretary remarked.

That's what "political retirement" means to private citizen Farley.