

Address by  
**Hon. James A. Farley**

at the

*Opening of the Monmouth County  
United Service Organizations  
War Fund Campaign*

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## ADDRESS

BY

HON. JAMES A. FARLEY

Wednesday, July 1, 1942

Mr. MARTIN J. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, under leave to extend my remarks in the Record, I include the following address by the Honorable James A. Farley, chairman of the United Service Organizations corporations committee, at the opening of the Monmouth County United Service Organizations war fund campaign at Asbury Park, N. J., June 24, 1942:

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, it is a privilege to be here in Asbury Park this evening and represent the United Service Organizations at the opening of the Monmouth County United Service Organizations war fund campaign for \$95,000. This sum has been agreed upon as Monmouth County's quota of the \$32,000,000 needed by the United Service Organizations during the coming year to maintain its 510 clubs and 255 smaller units already in operation, and to service 200 additional clubs required to keep pace with our rapidly expanding armed forces, which are expected to number six to eight million men in the Army and 1,000,000 men in the Navy by 1943.

To extend its high standard of service to an army and navy of this size is a great challenge to the United Service Organizations. But the challenge goes further than that. It goes also to the American people, for the United Service Organizations is supported entirely by their voluntary contributions.

I am able to assure you from personal knowledge, that the United Service Organizations is an efficient organization, operated throughout on a sound, businesslike basis, affording maximum service to men in uniform of every dollar contributed. Indeed, what amazes me is the fact that the United Service Organizations is able to stretch its dollars so far that the actual operating costs represent but 2 cents a day per soldier or sailor. This, I learned, is largely made possible by the 400,000 volunteers who participate in United Service Organizations programs.

Yes, the United Service Organizations will do its part if it is given the money it needs. I am happy to report to you that the American people are generously rallying to the support of the United Service Organizations war fund campaign with their time and with their dollars. Already 252 campaign committees throughout the Nation have com-

pleted their quotas, including such cities as Memphis, Buffalo, Cincinnati, and Rochester. Many smaller cities and scores of counties have reached their goals. In Delaware, \$50,000 has been contributed through payroll deductions of 1 hour's pay per week for 5 weeks by 15,000 employees.

To date, more than 60 percent of United Service Organizations' goal for the spring campaign has been subscribed. But 60 is not 100, and we must not let down. We must bring the number to 100 percent all over the Nation, and I am confident that you good people of Asbury Park and Monmouth County will not be content with any percentage figure less than 100. Am I correct?

I almost think that the best way I could impress you with the importance of supporting United Service Organizations would be by letting you know what the service men themselves think of it—on the principle that your best advertisements came from "satisfied customers." Recently at United Service Organizations headquarters in the Empire State Building I was shown an amazing document. I called it a document for want of a better word. Actually, it consisted of a compilation of remarks written by service men and visitors in guest books which are kept at many United Service Organizations clubs.

Why did these comments seem so significant and revealing to me? Because the one note struck more often than any other was the idea of "home." What these fine young men look for is some substitute for the home and family and friends they have left behind. They crave it with a deep and understandable hunger. Homelike surroundings, something that reminds them of home is what lies uppermost in their hearts. The United Service Organizations supplies these "second homes."

Let me read you a few of these comments. Many of them go like this:

"The United Service Organizations is just like home to me."

Another: "I struck home."

Still another, "Let me move in. It's just like home."

And so on. There are scores like that.

All comments aren't from service men. Listen to this one from a mother who had visited her son in camp:

"Your kindness to my boy will never be forgotten."

My point in reading these comments is to leave with you the same impression I obtained from them—that what the service men look for when off duty is a second home. Remember that they have changed abruptly from civilian life to the routine disciplined life of men under arms. It is a terrific wrench in living habits. We don't need a psychologist to tell us that it means a period of adjustment. Our men are not sissies, they don't want to be coddled. Wake Island, Bataan, Corregidor, Coral Sea, and Midway have proven what stuff our men are made of.

On the contrary, I think it is very fine that our men are home-loving, that home, as one soldier expressed it, "always strikes a tender chord in our hearts."

That longing may be silent at times, but it is always present. Whenever the men leave Government reservations on a few hours' or a few days' leave, they may not consciously define it to themselves as such, but no matter what they do, they are seeking some place to go, some activity or association that has one or more elements that make up home life. When I used this word "home" I do not mean literally a space within four walls, for home is more than a mere structure. Various elements combine to make up what we call home life—the spirit and love that reside there, family members, friends, and neighbors who come and go, sociability and recreation within easy reach. All these things are in my mind when I speak of home in connection with service men and the United Service Organizations.

A remark by a soldier, reported to me, illustrates what I mean when I say that service men seek, in different forms, these elements that constitute home. This soldier was shy. He didn't talk easily to strangers. A volunteer hostess at a United Service Organization club noticed him sitting alone and began to talk to him. Once the soldier got started, he told all in one breath about his family, his girl, his work, and his interests before he joined the service. At the end of an hour the soldier—with a load off his chest—said, "Thanks for the conversation."

It may seem strange that a soldier can get so lonesome for talk that he must "thank" a stranger for listening to him. But I am told that this is by no means uncommon at United Service Organizations clubs. Perhaps in the coming days you might think of this lonesome soldier and many of his comrades and remember that your dollars may allow others to say "thanks for the conversation."

Obviously, the United Service Organizations cannot replace the home. It does not claim to do so. It does try—and magnificently succeeds—to provide as many as possible of the different elements that make up the kind of life to which our men have been accustomed before they entered service. This is done by a variety of services designed to reach men in uniform wherever they may be.

Since the clubs are the heart and pulse of United Service Organizations service, let's consider them first. Eighteen months ago there were no United Service Organizations clubs. Today, a great network of 510 clubs and 255 smaller units extend from Alaska, all across the country from coast to coast, down into the Canal Zone and into the Caribbean. Thirty-one of these clubs are on offshore bases.

The men turn to these clubs as they would to neighborhood clubs back home—a place where they can freshen up in the showers, lounge and do nothing, shoot a game of pool, read, write home, have a bite at the snack bar, whatever their mood of the moment may inspire. They may also take part in various

hobby classes—metal and woodwork, art classes, and photo clubs. But what they want most of all is to regain touch with civilian life. This is an indispensable part of United Service Organizations service. More than 1,000 civilian volunteers assist in programs at every United Service Organizations operation—in games, parties, dances, and so on. In other words, the resourceful club director plans activities to meet the different tastes and interests of men taken from all walks of life. One thing the boys seem unanimous about is girls, girls, and still more girls for dances and sociability.

The public hardly realizes that many thousands of service men are constantly traveling on leave or furlough or on special duty. Particularly since Pearl Harbor, large bodies of troops have been moved by the railroads. For these traveling men in uniform the United Service Organizations inaugurated a special service—troops-in-transit lounges. You may have seen them set apart in railroad or bus stations. In 47 cities the service men know what that friendly United Service Organizations sign means. It means a comfortable lounge of their own, with reading and writing material and an information service which supplies tickets to shows and invitations to dinners and dances in private homes. Incidentally this service is operated by the National Travelers Aid Association, a member agency of United Service Organizations. The other member agencies are the Young Men's Christian Association, the Young Women's Christian Association, the Salvation Army, the National Catholic Community Service, and the Jewish Welfare Board.

The problems which United Service Organizations workers have to meet at troops-in-transit lounges are of infinite variety, but whatever they may be, the girls have an answer ready.

One day a husky soldier approached the information desk and said that he was on several days' leave. "What would you like to do?" the United Service Organizations worker asked. "Well, mam," the soldier replied, "I've been a farmer all my life and I'd sure like to milk some cows and shuck corn." Impossible? Not for the United Service Organizations. A farm was located for that boy where he spent 3 happy days milking cows and shucking corn.

But there are other service men stationed outside of cantonments that the United Service Organization has not forgotten. Following Pearl Harbor, units of men were placed on detached guard duty along both coasts, manning anti-aircraft and coast artillery batteries and serving at observation posts. These outposts are far from habitations. The men get leave infrequently and life is pretty dull. But it's brighter when the United Service Organizations' mobile service truck pulls up with portable movies, books and magazines, and good things to eat, supplied by women from the surrounding community. Over 100 United Service Organizations mobile units work in and out of these coastal outposts

bringing cheer and a bit of home to the lonely sentinels guarding the homeland.

It may be news to some of you that the United Service Organization, through the whole-hearted cooperation of the entertainment world, is conducting the largest single theatrical enterprise on record. It is being done by the United Service Organization affiliate—United Service Organization camp shows. Fifteen companies are now touring 225 Army camps and Navy bases, playing to a total of 50,000 service men a night, six nights a week, free of charge. Smaller units play at embarkation centers, military hospitals, warships in port, and overseas bases.

I hope in these few minutes I have been able to give you an idea of the variety, extent, and nature of United Service Organization services. They all bring me back to the point I made at the beginning of this talk. Several million young men have left their homes. Several million more, in all probability, will leave their homes. The mission of the United Service Organization is to reach these men in the wide variety of their services, wherever they may be, and try to recreate for them some semblance of a "sec-

ond home." I need not tell you how important this is for our national welfare. So it's up to us—all of us—to have, so to speak, another home beside our own—but on the giving end. We can do that by contributing generously to the United Service Organization war fund campaign so that the United Service Organization, in our name, may provide that second home.

The service men who were civilians during United Service Organization's campaign last year are perhaps in a better position than any others to appreciate the importance of contributing to United Service Organization. Listen to what one soldier wrote in a United Service Organization club guest book:

"I chipped in a buck for the United Service Organization campaign before I enlisted and boy, oh boy, I've gotten it back a thousand times over since I've been in service."

I submit these words to the people of Ashbury Park and Monmouth County with the suggestion that you take them to heart and ponder over them, and then do what your heart tells you to do. I am sure your heart will have but one answer—give to the United Service Organization.