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Address by Hon. James A. Farley

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

OF

HON. EUGENE J. KEOGH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 20, 1953

Mr. KEOGH. Mr. Speaker, under leave to extend my remarks in the RECORD, I include the following address delivered by Hon. James A. Farley, Chairman of the Board of the Coca-Cola Export Corporation, at the annual luncheon meeting of the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce at the Hotel St. George, Brooklyn, N. Y., on May 18, 1953:

Mr. FARLEY:

At the outset of my remarks this noon, let me tell you how pleased I am that I could accept your president's, Mr. Hooper's, invitation to speak at the 1953 annual meeting of the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce today. Coming over to Brooklyn to a gathering like this, while a bit different in character from my usual appearance in your borough the week preceding the November elections each year, is comparable in that as I look around this room I see so many of my Brooklyn friends—men whom I have become intimately acquainted with over a long period of years. In a sense, being here today is a sort of home week.

I understand that the usual procedure at meetings like this is for the principal speaker to extol the virtues, the progress and prosperity—the geography of the host city, but it seems to me that none of you would be participating in this gathering if you were not fully cognizant of Brooklyn's superiority—and I am not going to dwell too heavily on those attributes now. I am going to speak to you as a businessman, and also as one who has some familiarity with government.

The problems of the Borough of Brooklyn, in a general way, can be compared to the problems of our country, domestically, as every one of us who has the interest of our Nation at heart is concerned with the problems that we must solve in the days ahead, especially one related to this very vital and I might even say overall phase of governmental policy. I am referring to the role that businessmen have been called upon to play in the administration of President Eisenhower.

We have been led to believe that President Eisenhower has taken the position that the affairs of the country can best be handled by businessmen, and his appointments to the Cabinet and lower administrative levels, up to this time, have clearly indicated what he has in mind.

I would like to begin this discussion with a quotation from a distinguished editorial writer and historian, Mr. Gerald Johnson. I quote him now: "When a man has made a vast success in private business it is usually the case that he has been the boss for many years and is accustomed to having his lightest word regarded with respect. It is hard for him to realize that when he takes a Government office in a democracy he becomes a subordinate and must expect to have everything he suggests regarded with suspicion, unless he can explain it very clearly. Explaining to the public is a large part of the art of democratic government and it is an art in which few big businessmen are well well trained." That is the end of Mr. Johnson's quotation.

Now I do not wish to either disparage or praise the views of Mr. Johnson, but I should like to talk to you today both as a businessman and as one who has spent half a lifetime in the public service. I think there are many facets to this discussion and it is well that we should consider objectively what

is meant by a businessman in Government and what is meant by what some have chosen to refer to as business statesmanship.

We are often misled or deceived by labels or words or phrases and it is well to remember what we have in mind, or shall I say that it is well to approach this problem with a feeling that in the final analysis this country is not run for the benefit of any particular segment of its population such as business, labor, or professional interests, but it should be, and I believe has been, run for all the people no matter to what group of private or public life they belong. It is quite true that we are what may be called a business Nation; that is to say, within the brief span of 200 years which is, as Dr. Santayana once said, "a brief moment in eternity." We have built up one of the most fabulous nations in the history of all mankind. We have had able and courageous men who have built throughout the years great railroads, developed our mines, worked our farms, and created great industrial empires. In connection with their activities, we have also attained some amazing achievements in the field of science.

We have crossed the frontiers of hidden meanings on earth and in the sky and have brought forth instruments of mercy for the sick and evolved weapons to fight the elements in order to destroy those factors which militated against a better and more comfortable life. We have been leaders in the solution of transportation problems.

So today we may consider ourselves as world leaders not only in business and commerce but also in the fields of invention and scientific developments. It has been said that we have neglected to build up and foster a culture, or shall I call it an indigenous culture. But I, for one, dissent from this view for I believe that we have slowly but nevertheless surely expanded our native culture and have made as much progress in this brief period of our national existence as have older nations in the early stages of their growth.

The glory that was Rome's and Greece's is now the glory of the whole world. The glory of America, while it may reside in the creation of new and embracing and almost magical facilities for the convenience and comfort of mankind, is also tied up with the important fact that this has been accomplished in a country which held out the first torch of democracy in the world.

All this has been achieved in a country which is rooted by heritage in a high-minded conception of the dignity of human beings, flowing from the pure waters of democracy. It is a country where the voice of the common man has risen to full strength and fine eloquence so that together our people have contributed with brawn and brain and articulate ideas a tremendous share toward the evolution of our modern civilization.

We have now, by force of circumstances, taken a foremost place in world leadership. We have reached this international eminence in such a short time that there is no record in history to compare with our breathtaking progress and the momentum with which we have moved as a united nation. It has carried us to obligations and responsibilities which we have been forced to assume by the march of events.

It is no longer a question which direction we should take or how we should act. We are one of the leading components of a world that has shrunk in size because science has destroyed the meaning and significance of physical distance. From our national front porch we are but a day or two away from the other continents. When European, South American, Asian, or African leaders speak we can hear them at the very moment they are speaking.

Now, the question is—how can we, a so-called business Nation, carry the obligations that have been thrust upon us with the resources, both material and mental, that we have at our command? Can the businessmen who have been hailed as business statesmen and who have been called to Washington by President Eisenhower meet with a high degree of intelligence and a keen perceptive sense the incredibly staggering problems, not only in our country but throughout the world.

Mr. Johnson, whom I quoted at the beginning of my talk, does not think that businessmen are sufficiently trained in the art of government in a democracy.

I recall during the Second World War many able and distinguished businessmen who temporarily abandoned their private interests to serve the Government. They were men of patriotism and were qualified by reason

of their native ability and wide experience to carry out the assignments given them.

I yield to none in my respect and admiration for those businessmen who gave so willingly of their time and effort in a spirit of unselfishness to help their country. The men who were picked had demonstrated their preeminence in the particular field which was related to the carrying out of the war program. I need not dwell on the results they achieved. It is a matter of historical record. Their contribution to the victory cannot be overestimated.

But if we are to accept the theory that businessmen are not trained to participate in governmental affairs we must assume that they are limited by knowledge of their own particular industries and that the national horizon is too broad for them. It may be urged that their experience and knowledge are largely confined to the problems in their industries and does not stretch out to the wider scope of human relationships in a vast country like the United States, with its 140 millions of many races, colors, and creeds. Where they may deal successfully with their business associates, the personnel of their organizations or their customers, they might not be as effective when they are confronted with the challenge of domestic and global problems.

In this mixed-up age, there is considerable confusion about business. Attacks are made upon all the business processes, upon big business as monopolistic, upon small business as wasteful and uneconomic, upon the men who achieve success in business.

Nevertheless, the production and distribution of goods and the provision of services are the functions of every business organization, whether the economy is capitalistic, socialistic or communistic. The methods have to be the same or the production will fall short, or the distribution will become fouled up, or the services will be inadequate.

In a word, those who attack the American business system have to use the best methods developed by American business. That, Soviet Russia has done. For years Russian engineers, factory superintendents, distribution experts worked in this country studying our methods, analyzing our processes, learning how to do business in their own country as we do business in our country. They spent millions of dollars buying our Patent Office reports, our Department of Commerce reports, our Agriculture Department reports, the product of business school and our scientific societies.

What they did in the United States they duplicated in Great Britain and in Germany. If you look at a Russian tractor factory it is like something out of Detroit. If you look at a Russian department store it is like Gimbel's. Even in that Communist country, where the government owns the means of production and distribution, business must be done along business lines; cost accounting must be accurately worked out; engineering estimates must be correct; the stresses and strains of the market have to be taken into consideration. No philosophers have yet devised a system for making or moving goods without the use of money for exchange.

American business need not apologize for its ideas or methods. It need not retreat before the onslaught of alien and antagonistic propaganda. Its capitalistic, competitive system has justified itself by its tremendous and varied productivity, by the maintenance of the highest standard of living despite depressions, wars and inflations, by the high wages paid to labor, by the flexibility with which American business approaches new problems and new products.

So firmly has the competitive system stood in the face of dangerous economic conditions that while other countries have found themselves forced to resort to government-owned trusts and cartels, in the United States no such development occurred. Business remains competitive and new industries are constantly coming into existence.

As long as competition continues the business system remains buoyant and vital. Trusts and cartels are the processes which lead to socialism. Business then suffers from the same weaknesses as governments. The dead hand of bureaucracy stifles new ideas and new methods. The routine-minded personality emerges to the top; the man who never tries anything new and therefore never gets into trouble becomes the master. Genius dies on the vine; experimentation is discouraged.

This has never happened in the United States and as long as it does not happen our people will continue to benefit from a

dynamic, living, progressive business system.

I said when I began my remarks that I was going to speak to you as a businessman, and one who has had some familiarity with Government. Each phase of our national life, our life as citizens of our State and our life in our local communities has its peculiar problems and it would seem to me that the ideal state of affairs would be the blending of business acumen and know-how with the overall problems of all the people—and that applies to Brooklyn.

The opportunities to retain and to further increase the supremacy of Brooklyn commercially are so enormous that it is next to impossible to enumerate them. Your borough, ideally located on the eastern tip of Long Island, occupying 90 square miles, in 1950 had the largest population of the five boroughs comprising greater New York. As a manufacturing center, of approximately 7,200 factories, paying around $690 million to about 300,000 workers annually, its contribution to the economy of the community in that one phase alone is breathtaking. Your port facilities are so good that the cargo value it carries exceeds 50 percent of all carried in the entire port of New York. And I could elaborate upon your vast number of retail stores, the impact of the navy yard and its effect upon the economy of this borough.

We are so accustomed to Brooklyn's cultural advantages that we take them for granted—and I refer to your 2 universities and 3 well-known colleges and 2 outstanding technical schools. The great Brooklyn Civic Center project, in a large measure made possible by your borough president, my good friend John Cashmore, has been hailed as one of the Nation's leading examples of wise and farsighted urban redevelopment. Every effort possible, in keeping with the times, has been made by your borough government, and by your civic and business organizations to aid this borough's development and improvement—and it follows that all of this incurs great and increased costs. We hear on all sides discussions of the so-called crisis in our city's financial affairs, criticisms and complaints of inefficiency in the departments which are necessary to the operation of the city's government, its protection and very existence. We also know that business and industry as well as the citizenry generally are opposed to increased taxes. And yet, we all want improvement, prosperity, a beautiful city, parks, hospitals, housing, and how are we going to have them? It is simple arithmetic to men of your experience, your business and civic responsibilities to understand that growth of any sort creates added costs and that it costs more to run the city of New York and its component boroughs now than it did 30 years ago, or even 7 or 8 years ago.

Brooklynites should never forget that they constitute a major part of the world's greatest city. The city of New York would be relatively low in the ranks of important national and international communities without Brooklyn.

As part of the world's greatest city, you have a responsibility to take them seriously. That is, the responsibility of insisting as citizens that the city to which they contribute so greatly is the finest, the most progressive, the most civilized—the very best city in the world.

In order to seriously fulfill this obligation a broad look must be taken—a much broader look than any I have seen attempted recently of the problems before us. We have the tendency to miss the forest because of the trees, or to put it another way to miss the skyline because of the bridge.

For that bridge and the river it crosses have constituted a psychological barrier between the community of Brooklyn and the little island on the other side.

Now, whether the subject we discuss is transit, traffic, or police, education, hospitals, or the sanitary services, we have come to have a common interest; that is, you can't be ideal with respect to any of these things on the shores of Corlears Hook if you haven't done something about them around Paedergat Basin. These obscure references are just to show you how much I know about the city. In plainer language, what applies to Greenpoint is likely to be equally important in Greenwich Village.

As a matter of fact, the area in which the problems of community planning and living have become reasonably alike, is now much broader than the five boroughs of New York City. Perhaps it would be more accurate if we were to take the 22 counties

immediately adjacent to the confluence of the Hudson and East Rivers as an area in which very much the same kind of thing is happening, surprisingly similar problems are being encountered, where needs differ chiefly in the names by which they are called.

You will ask, I suppose, what this has to do with Brooklyn and more particularly what it has to do with Brooklyn business and industry. And if you do, I'll tell you it has everything to do with Brooklyn, either as a broad political division, a community of 3 million people, or as a place which has traditionally been a fertile seeding ground for everything American enterprise stands for, and all because you are the center of this wider metropolitan area. It is simply a matter of fact that in the 21 counties immediately around you in New Jersey, Long Island, upper New York State, and Connecticut there exist today problems material to the 5 counties of New York City which must also be seen and must be solved. This is as much a part of Brooklyn's business as anything else.

However you proceed for the improvement of Brooklyn, it cannot come by isolation; it cannot come until Fairfield County in Connecticut, Nassau, Bronx, Richmond, and Brooklyn realize they must together find the answers to what troubles them. Plans for improved transit may have to be sidetracked, and in the process you may gain some belt tightening in administrative agencies, but you may also have to wait on line longer when you go to them for any reason.

In concluding my remarks today, I would like to leave this thought with you, and it is, that whatever procedure the people of Brooklyn follow we all hope they will not do so as Brooklynites but as New Yorkers. We want New York to go ahead; we want it to grow; we want it to become even more attractive than it now is. We want it to be a bigger and a better port. We want it to be a finer center of culture and industry. We want it to consolidate and advance its positions as a financial center. We want its transit to be better and more extensive. We want its police to go on justifying the adjective "finest." We want its fire department to be the envy of and the pattern for every advance city in the world as it has been in the past.

For we are a proud people who live and work at the center of the world's greatest concentration of advanced, enlightened, and prosperous human beings and we are entitled to the best. Some day this entire metropolitan area, all or part, of the 21 counties around Brooklyn may find it provident to make a common lot and meet their problems together. Such a thing isn't to be considered in any way impossible. Already it is being done. One example is the port authority, jumping the line between New York and New Jersey for the common good of the harbor.

But whatever happens it will always be true that the worker in Bushwick, the housewife in New Canaan, the executive in Rockville Centre or Bound Brook or Tarrytown still look on New York as their city. In and out of it, they still want more, not less, of its good things.

You, the members of the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, if the truth were known, want that, too.

Jim Farley on Brooklyn's Isolationism

Thursday, May 21, 1953

Mr. KEOGH. Mr. Speaker, under leave to extend my remarks in the RECORD, I include the following editorial which appeared in the Brooklyn Eagle on May 19, 1953:

JIM FARLEY ON BROOKLYN'S ISOLATIONISM

Critics of Brooklyn are prone to charge this community and its leaders with provincialism. But this completely twists the facts of the case. The reason that Brooklynites so often appear in the role of fighting for the rights and needs of this borough is that the powers that be in this city so often seem to put Manhattan in the No. 1 spot and practice discrimination against Brooklyn, and we have to fight back on the defense.

Fairness requires us to say that this is no longer always the case as it once seemed to be, but perhaps Manhattanites have begun to realize our overwhelming population superiority which naturally increases the need for municipal services of all kinds.

But our point is that Brooklyn is not guilty of isolationism as James A. Farley hinted in his significant address before the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce's annual luncheon yesterday.

"The people in this borough," he said, "too often miss the skyline because of the bridge. That bridge and the river it crosses have constituted a psychological barrier between the community of Brooklyn and the little island on the other side."

We want to take this opportunity to declare that Brooklyn does have the broad outlook, the far vision ahead. How can it be otherwise with a community whose wealth is based on commerce from the seven seas that link our docks with all the world?

Furthermore, our people have ties of birth or descent from practically every country on the globe. We know of no more cosmopolitan community, and that even includes the Borough of Manhattan across the river.

Jim Farley spoke as a businessman with many years of experience in Government. He certainly has authentic credentials to talk on this subject and there is no doubt there will be wide interest in his apparent desire currently to get back more actively into the political field.

Mr. Farley is no stranger here although his visits have come more frequently in the midst of political campaigns. Over the years he has made a host of friends and admirers, which is true wherever he goes. But here the ties are closer. He even knows about Paerdegat Basin and Newton Creek. And Ebbets Field is no stranger to him, or indeed to anyone who calls himself a friend of Brooklyn.

There were many Democratic Party stalwarts at the luncheon and also most of the top leaders of Brooklyn commerce and industry. We noticed that both groups were equally delighted to hail Mr. Farley, a welcome in which the Eagle is happy to join.

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