

REMARKS BEFORE NATIONAL MACARONI MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION - JULY 17, 1946

The people of Minneapolis are honored to have the annual convention of the National Macaroni Manufacturers Association in our City. Minneapolis is known as one of the great grain and food centers of America. It has gained an enviable reputation for the processing of the finest cereal products that the food industry has made available to the public.

As Mayor of this City, I always take great pleasure in telling just a little bit about our community. Like all mayors, I enjoy pointing with pride to our achievements and our assets. With equal candor, I hesitate to tell of anything about our liabilities and shortcomings.

Your convention is gathered in the 15th largest city of our nation. You are in a city that sees a great business and industrial future. Ours is a community that has developed economically and culturally with an ever increasing pace this past quarter of a century.

We are fortunately situated along the banks of the mighty Mississippi River. Our post war plans include the development of a great upper harbor project which will make possible low cost water transportation to the Gulf of Mexico and to all ports along the Mississippi River system.

We are equally proud of our railroad transportation facilities. Nine major railroads enter our city and carry our produce to all sections of America. We are transportation minded here, recognizing that the flow of commerce is only possible where communities have learned to utilize all means of transportation.

Our airport is one of the major air fields of the country. Our immediate plans call for its expansion in the year 1947. We foresee the day that we will be a main terminal point in world routes of transportation.

This will not only have a beneficial effect upon our industry, but will fundamentally improve and alter our social and cultural institutions.

I want you to look around our community while you are here. There are twenty-two lakes within our City, the finest park and playground system in the country, thousands of splendid homes, fine boulevards and streets, along with a progressive educational system. Our greatest asset, however, is our people — a people that represent over fifty-seven different races, creeds and nationalities — a people that enjoy work and pride themselves upon doing a job well and efficiently.

We have had an enviable record of labor-management cooperation. Our community has had few important labor disputes in this post war period. During the war we learned how to work together. We are attempting to continue that relationship.

We invite new industry into Minneapolis. Our invitation is accepted and acceptable because here we are in the very center of middle America, the one area of the nation that has unlimited possibilities for growth in population and expansion in its economy.

There are many disconcerting trends in our international and national affairs. This is a day when men who are entrusted with responsibility must have a deep faith in our American philosophy of life and our American political and economic institutions. A great deal of this responsibility for a better world and a better nation rests upon business and its leaders.

American people everywhere look to business for leadership. Every child in this country has been taught to respect the industrialist, the businessman, the professional person. It is not enough that business just make money. It is not enough that businessmen merely participate in economic affairs. Today business and politics are one and inseparable. The entire economic life of America is conditioned by the direction and

nature of our politics. Likewise the politics of this country is directed and motivated by the condition of our economy.

America will have a bright future only if those who are in positions of leadership give guidance and direction to the development of a wholesome and productive community. We must lift our sights. We must have a perspective or a vision of a world that we want. We must understand that we are living in an integrated economy that is sensitive to economic and political difficulties in any section of the world or nation.

Whether we like it or not, we are our brother's keeper. Whether we like it or not, we are living in "one world." Whether we like it or not, if it is to be a better world it will be because Americans and American leadership make it possible.

To put it frankly, much has been given unto us and much is expected of us. It will do us no good to gripe and complain about the sorry state of affairs. We are the most powerful nation in the world. We possess the richest and most productive economy that mankind has ever known. With all of these blessings comes the weight of responsibility and leadership.

I am a great believer in local government and local community action. I oftentimes feel that many of us would rather concentrate our thoughts upon saving the world than we would upon getting to work taking care of our own back yard, neighborhood, and city. American business and the average businessman in the average city has his first obligation in his own community. Don't go around complaining about the political and economic activities of those in other walks of life if you are unwilling to participate in an effective program of community action.

As with all things, someone will be out in front leading. The

question now is, will it be you or will you let George do it. And that George may not be someone who is deeply devoted to American ideals.

The so-called good old days are gone. There is nothing that we can go back to that will satisfy the needs of today and tomorrow. There is but one direction that we can face, and that is straight ahead with our eyes fixed upon new goals of production, new standards of living, and new devotion to personal freedom. We must rid our mind of the nonsense of scarcity. We must pledge ourselves to a program of unlimited production which, in turn, compels us to achieve full employment. I lay no claim to prophetic genius, but it is as clear as the nose on your face that if ever again this nation goes into an economic tailspin where millions of men and women are without work, then our way of life, our system of enterprise, our political institutions will be shaken to the very foundation.

Our republic may witness under such circumstances a catastrophe that will destroy democracy. There is but one answer to our problem. Labor and management must work together as a team, and both parties must be willing to work with government in a spirit of cooperation rather than antagonism.

We need more than unity which can be a forced condition. We need understanding and cooperation which comes only when men of good will meet together in mutual respect. It is in this manner that a community grows, that an individual progresses, and that a nation lives.



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