

Executive urges business action

By Alice Collins
staff writer

The chairman of K mart Corp. urged business and community leaders last week to stop pointing fingers of blame for current "economic tragedies" and help lead the way to the future.

Bernard M. Fauber of Bloomfield Hills addressed his remarks to members of the Troy Chamber of Commerce and their guests from surrounding communities at a luncheon meeting in Troy.

He called on his listeners to adopt an "It can be done" attitude, to analyze current and future social and market trends and to make business decisions based on those studies.

Fauber told how in 1959-60 K mart (then known as the S.S. Kresge Co.) saved itself from "death" by changing from retail variety to discount stores.

Then, five years ago, the "disposable society" began to change. When consumers were beginning to buy products based on quality and not just price, K mart began adding upgraded merchandise.

K mart — with world headquarters now in Troy — is today the second largest general merchandise retailer in the country employing more than 50,000 people and serving more than 10 percent of American consumers.

NO MATTER what guidelines you use, Fauber told his listeners, the message today is the same, "not just in downtown Detroit but right in our own backyards of Troy."

"Somewhere our society has failed to grow, it has failed to provide for the hopes and ambitions of our citizens."

"Nothing has or will be accomplished by blaming our problems on the unfair competition from the Japanese, Germans or Koreans," he continued.

He also urged the community leaders to stop blaming government taxation or high interest rates. "It's popular, but pointless. Those are simply excuses."

THE AUTOMOBILE industry which has been the driving economic force "that brought paradise to so many" in the United States and southeastern Michigan is not expected to return to its former glories, he said studies reveal.

The K mart chairman told his listeners first to go for "an attitude adjustment," to foster a can-do attitude by encouraging individuals within their businesses to try — and to reward them for doing so.

Add to that "serious strategic planning and we develop the proper antidotes for our current malaise," he said. Fauber told his audience how K mart Corp. used attitude, careful study and planning to pull itself out of economic woes twice in the last 33 years.

Fauber said the company began "dying a not so slow death." In 1959 when the discount store revolution hit.

As a result of extensive study at that time, the K mart concept was born. "As we look back, we can honestly say had we not made the change from variety stores to discount stores, there would be no K mart Corp. today."

"K mart Corp. 2,300 store managers must be acutely aware of their marketplace," said Fauber. "They must adapt to changes in that marketplace."

"We must recognize, reward, and compensate those individuals who are willing to take on intelligent risks and put forth extra effort."

"As business leaders," he continued, "we should evaluate our personnel based upon some kind of effort per share (of company earnings)."

Fauber said business and community leaders, while identifying strategy to put local communities back on a renewed path of growth and opportunity, must also identify the path for the future.

"Frequently I hear that robotics is the key. Perhaps this is so."

"Yet, we should be aware that even if robotics develops into a viable industry, it is only one industry. As I travel from community to community, those which seem to be the healthiest are those which are diversified."

THIS AREA's economic strength is in having one of the best labor forces anywhere in the country, Fauber said. A highly-motivated work force is essential to success.

"You can have no natural resources and your country can be blown up as was Japan, and if you have a work force, you'll make it."

In addition to a labor force, this area also has top educational institutions, roads, existing industrial complexes and accessibility of water, he said.

"The whole essence of the free enterprise system lies in its ability to adapt to change and to monitor the value of change. All too frequently, the tendency in American has been to manage for the greatest short-term results, not long-term rewards."

If American consumers have any choice at all, said Fauber, they will force change to take place. "Our challenge is to recognize and take advantage of each opportunity."



K mart chairman Bernard M. Fauber urged business and community leaders to identify changes in the marketplace, then adapt to those changes.

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LEGAL NOTICE
PUBLIC HEARING
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM/JOBS BILL
1983-84 PROGRAM YEAR

The Department of Housing and Urban Development has advised the City of Farmington Hills that it is entitled to \$175,000 for the 1983-1984 Community Development Block Grant Program year. These funds have been authorized by the Department of Housing and Urban Development under the Federal Jobs Bill.

Notice is hereby given that on Monday, June 20, 1983, at 7:00 P.M. in the Council Chambers at Municipal Building, 11835 Eleven Mile Road, City of Farmington Hills, Oakland County, Michigan, at which time and place, the Farmington Hills City Council will conduct a public hearing to discuss Community Development objectives and proposed use of Community Development Block Grant Funds.

The projected use of funds is for the following proposed activities:

- Storm drainage improvements, throughout the area bounded by Middlebelt, Shawwassee, Inkster, and Grand River (\$105,000).
- Drainage improvements, which includes the placement of storm pipe along Colfax and Farmington and Oak Roads (\$30,000).
- Shawwassee sidewalk: the installation of approximately 1855 linear feet of sidewalk on Shawwassee, east of Middlebelt Road (\$22,000).
- Curb and gutter improvements at all intersections on Colfax Road between Farmington and Oak Roads (\$7,000).

Improvements throughout the City, which without the use of Block Grant Funds, would not be possible. Said improvements may include, but are not limited to, sidewalks, drainage improvements etc. (\$9,000).

The public is invited to comment and/or make suggestions on the proposed use of such funds and the City's participation in the Federal Jobs Bill.

All interested citizens or interested parties are encouraged to participate in the Public Hearing. Further information regarding this meeting or technical assistance regarding the Jobs Bill may be obtained at the City of Farmington Hills, Planning office, 31655 W. Eleven Mile Rd. or by calling 674-6115.

FLOYD A. CAIRNS,
City Clerk
31655 Eleven Mile Road
Farmington Hills, Michigan

Published June 13, 1983

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DR. WEISS

PROTECTING THE ELDERLY

From time to time this column will deal with problems of the elderly, this week will focus on the hazards of stairs.

To be safe stairs should be at least 12-14 inches wide, and have a hand rail on either side that the elderly individual can grasp. Almost invariably, cellar stairs are unsafe, the steps are narrow, lighting about them is poor, loose boards or objects are often present, and usually a hand rail is lacking. Making appropriate change is worthwhile as no amount of expense can equal the cost if the elderly person should fall and break a hip.

Not all steps are bad. For instance, living on the second floor of a two-family flat may be beneficial for the elderly individual. The walk up and down the stairs provides exercise that is valuable in preserving the tone of the individual's heart, lungs and muscles.

Look around the elderly's residence. If you see the steps are hazardous, act now to correct the problem. To do so shows both your love and common sense.

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