

Admin Staff

December 17, 1952

MEMORANDUM TO THE STAFF:

In view of the fact that Mr. Gaston will be leaving us next month, I know that all members of the staff of the Bank will be interested in the editorial tribute to him in the Washington Post on Wednesday, December 17, 1952, which reads as follows:

"Herbert Gaston's retirement from the chairmanship of the Export-Import Bank comes not because of the approaching change of Administration--his term as a director of the Bank runs to 1955--but because at 71 and after 20 years of arduous Government service, rest and relaxation are his due. He is, perhaps, not to be counted among those civil servants who have made Government a lifetime career, since he was for many years a newspaperman--one of the best in the craft, indeed, serving for a time as the night editor of the New York World in its period of greatest glory. Henry Morgenthau, Jr., brought him to Washington and found in him an indefatigable and incorruptible assistant, seasoned, wise and resourceful. For a while he handled the Treasury Department's press relations, holding the high respect of every newsman. Later he discharged major executive responsibilities with a rock-ribbed regard for the public interest [as Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for six years].

"If he is not to be catalogued as a career civil servant, nevertheless his career in the Government affords a case study for his colleagues. He possesses a rare understanding of the civil service. Before he became a director of the Export-Import Bank in 1945 he served, at President Roosevelt's instance, as chairman of an Interdepartmental Committee on Employee Investigations. The committee scorned reliance on anonymous informers and the imputation of guilt by mere association. It conducted itself with a regard for the rights and reputations of Federal workers -- and with a respect for the ancient American standards of due process -- which the contemporary arbiters of these affairs seem to consider obsolete but which they would do well to emulate and recapture. Herbert Gaston is an exemplar of a great, if dying, tradition of public service. He made his own conduct in office a model for all who served with him."

Sidney Sherwood
Secretary

197
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*Editorial by
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