Address by HON. JIMMIE H. DAVIS, Governor of Louisiana, at the Annual Banquet of the BOGALUSA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, Bogalusa, La., Thursday, May 25, 1944, at 9:45 P.M., and Broadcast over WWL Radio Station, New Orleans, La., by remote control.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

I am very happy indeed to have the privilege of addressing you of the City of Bogalusa tonight. I welcome this privilege for more reasons than one.

First, I want to pay just tribute to the thriving and progressive people of Bogalusa for a wonderful record of community progress, and secondly, I would like to hold Bogalusa up as an example which may well be followed by other communities of our State.

It so happens that I come from a pine forest section of Louisiana. My earliest boyhood recollections are of the pine forest with their tall and majestic trees. I remember well the beauty and abundance of the pine forest before the axe and the saw and skidder moved in. I saw the forest before the sawmills came. I saw the melancholy waste of dead stumps and dead tree tops after the sawmills had gone.

I know the location of many scores of ghost towns,—towns that were once thriving with activity,—towns where people worked and hoped and dreamed of better tomorrows: now only shambles and a memory and these soon to fade away.

But, here is no ghost town. You in Bogalusa have not followed the sawmill town tradition. Here is a growing, thriving, dynamic city nesting in the fertile Pearl River Valley.
Bogalusa is a city of destiny because its founders were men of vision. It is a city with a great future and a great destiny because its people believe in it. They have their faces set toward that future and that greater destiny. Can I document that statement. I can and I will gladly do so. For there should be in the evidence inspiration for many other sections of Louisiana.

Bogalusa, the only city in the world, I believe, whose name is trade marked, was founded in 1906. That was only 33 years ago. It was founded by Frank and Charles Goodyear. In the center of 14 million acres of timber was erected the largest sawmill in the world. The company's name is known all over the world, The Great Southern Lumber Company.

The founders determined in the beginning that Bogalusa should not be a ghost town. The practice of encouraging and supporting other interests besides the sawmill has been followed ever since the founding of Bogalusa. I wish sawmill operators in some other sections of Louisiana had possessed such vision when they denuded millions of acres of pine forests in other sections of our State.

A recent industrial survey shows that Bogalusa now has 24 separate manufacturing establishments. There is your large paper mill. You have a furniture plant and corrugated box factory. You have a turpentine distillery and bag and paper mills and creosoting plants and other manufacturing concerns.

And, it pleased me very much in traveling through this section recently to observe the thousands of acres of cutover lands now bristling with young pines grown from seedlings either set out by hand or by natural seed fall, because of the farsighted policy adopted more than two decades ago. Other cutover lands have been converted into farms. Cotton, corn, cane, hay crops vegetables, and other farm products are raised. Washington Parish ranks first in cane syrup production.

Because of the fertility of your soils and the year-round season of this section, an abundant crop yield is had each year which adds to the prosperity of your farmers. A large canning plant is also operated to care for vegetable canning in this area.

Another basic industry, which at the present is in its infancy in this country, and which Bogalusa and the territory surrounding bid fair to develop and exploit, is the production of tung oil from the tung forests now growing. Bogalusa has one of the two plants in the country for the extraction of tung oil. The development of this industry is rapidly commanding notice throughout the Gulf Coast section.

Commercially speaking, Bogalusa occupies a strategic position for great trade expansion. With 206 retail establishments, Bogalusa's retail trade exceeds $5,000,000 annually. Bogalusa's wholesale establishments rank likewise in importance.

Bogalusa has excellent transportation facilities. In addition to the rail service, splendid bus and truck schedules are maintained for the benefit of patrons. Paved highways lead to Bogalusa from all directions.

The progressiveness of Bogalusa is also shown in the type and character of its institutions, among them being: a modern hospital, equipped to care for the wants of the city and approved by the American College of Surgeons; the Washington-St. Tammany Hospital; Young Men's Christian Association; Young Women's Christian Association; two banks, and other financial institutions; three newspapers; several hotels and rooming houses; churches of all major denominations; Rotary, Kiwanis and Lions Clubs, and the Bogalusa Chamber of Commerce. Many other institutions and organizations add to the work for the welfare and happiness of the good folks in your city.

Bogalusa ranks high in its school system, and has the distinction, with only two other cities of
the State, of maintaining a city school system second to none in the State. The Sullivan Memorial Trade School, a state vocational institution, is one of the finest in the State. Here real leadership is developed in industrial work.

It is to be noted that since 1941 your bank deposits have increased 82%; postal receipts 87%. General business has about doubled. Most of your industries may be converted to peace time usage without trouble.

I have gone into your development in some detail. Frankly I wanted the radio audience to know of what you have done. I wanted them to know what a determined and forward looking people could do. I wanted them to know what farsighted and intelligent industrial management could do toward community progress and betterment. I wanted our people to know that community decadence need not follow when a sawmill cuts out if the management and the people work together toward a better future.

You are a fine progressive people here in Bogalusa. You are now 17,000 strong. You will be much stronger when the next census is taken. I congratulate you on the miraculous progress you have made and the great future that undoubtedly awaits you.

As a final thought I want to pay tribute to the thoughts and effort you are giving to the post-war period. Your city and parochial authorities and your civic groups and public spirited citizens are thinking and working to provide jobs for our returning service men. That is the most important responsibility we have today.

It has been a great pleasure to be with you on this occasion and I thank you for your attention.

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Bogalusa Chamber of Commerce

Bogalusa, Louisiana