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Made in America Panel Proposes it's Time to Stop Making Trade a Dirty Word

Host Neal Asbury, along with co-host Dr. Rich Roffman, opened their nationally syndicated "Neal Asbury's Made in America" show on Radio America (aired by some 70 affiliates) with Neal and Dr. Roffman weighing in on Donald Trump's recent visit with Mexican president Enrique Peña Nieto, agreeing that some common ground was reached on immigration issues.

Continuing with the discussion was Made in America's first guest, Greg Corombos, Radio America's news director, who characterized Trump's Mexican visit as one that exceeded expectations and was highlighted by some good interaction on key immigration issues. Trump demonstrated that he could stand up to the Mexican president—and look presidential.

"Although Trump seemed to take a softer tone in Mexico, his tone when he arrived back in America was harder. He made it clear that he wasn't flip flopping on his immigration policy and returned to his three main objectives as it relates to Mexico: tougher border security, getting criminals deported, and ending the sanctuary cities that harbor illegals. Trump appealed to Nieto's need to create more jobs so that both the Mexican and American economies could strengthen," reported Corombos.

Neal suggested that more of this kind of "presidential" behavior will bring dividends.

"The polls are getting tighter but Trump has to win this by demonstrating that he is equipped to be president. The road ahead is tough for him, so he needs to be able to run the table on the contested states if he has any chance to be get elected. What's working in his favor is that the favorables for Hillary continue to drop, even among women," concluded Corombos.

Dr. Roffman and Neal turned the conversation to the business sector, with Neal quoting data from a Rasmussen poll that suggested that most Americans think the government should do more to protect American businesses.

"This is a very good sign that America realizes that when the American economy prospers it creates jobs. Entrepreneurs are the backbone of business. It's where American exceptionalism starts," maintained Neal.

Dr. Roffman agreed adding that the volatile and relatively weak GDP does not reflect

the America we know.

"We expect better than that. This doesn't mesh with how we perceive the American Dream," noted Dr. Roffman.

The conversation turned to politicians becoming disillusioned with trade – not just here but abroad. While the Trans Pacific Partnership" (TPP) with Asia is not about to be ratified anytime soon, the Trans-Atlantic Trade Partnership (TATP) with the European Union is also in trouble.

"The TATP has 27 chapters, but not a single chapter has been ratified yet after 14 rounds of debates," noted Neal, who reminded listeners that finding new markets is the key to protecting U.S. businesses, and "unless the U.S. finds free trade agreements that let America trade on a level playing field, we are losing out on an important source of commerce."

Continuing the discussion on trade, Neal noted that Cuba will soon become an important trading partner with the U.S. This is a message that has resonated with Dr. Roffman, who has launched a new magazine – Cuba Trade – that will provide updates and insights into the promising new trading opportunities with Cuba, a market that is hungry for American goods.

This segued to the next guest on Made in America: David Selesky, president of Ft. Lauderdale-based Stonegate Bank, which is the first American bank to issue credit cards in Cuba.

"A year ago, Cuba approached us about issuing a credit card. We did some research and thought that this was a good opportunity, especially for corporate customers who have had to give their employees a wad of cash to use in Cuba, and which are vulnerable to high exchange fees. We know that Cuba needs American goods and that the shipping costs from the U.S. are much cheaper than shipments from Mexico or Latin America," proposed Selesky.

The final guest on Made in America was Georgi Boorman, from The Federalist, whose article "Let's Deregulate Everyone Instead Of Applying Outdated Rules To New Ideas," takes aim at the taxi lobby, "which coerced the government of Massachusetts to assess a five-cent tax per trip on ridesharing services (out of a total 20-cent fee) that would directly subsidize the local taxi industry. In other words, because many customers like ridesharing such as Uber

and Lyft better than taxis, government is going to penalize their choice by forcing them to pay for the alternative."

Boorman contends that "transportation cronies, namely taxi unions, have been bleating for half a decade now that ridesharing companies need to carry the same regulatory burden as the taxi industry. While some regulations are necessary to protect both drivers and clients, many are simply onerous. Despite the burden, the "taxi cartel's" cozy relationship with local governments produces regulations that insulate established market players from new competition, because the bureaucracy through which they must maneuver just to get started can be prohibitively expensive to navigate."

Boorman suggested that while Uber has invested in innovation, taxi companies use their money to pay for lobbying efforts instead of reinvesting in their own operations.

This opened up Dr. Roffman's ongoing review of cronyism, proposing that for years taxi companies have exploited their drivers by charging high medallion fees and other costs forcing drivers to put in 14-hour days just to make any money once the fees have been paid off.

"The world is changing but taxi companies continue to operate their old ways, paying politicians under the table to enrich themselves at the expense of their employees and customers," concluded Dr. Roffman.

Each week Neal Asbury's Made in America provides Neal's insights into the week's top news stories and their impact on the worlds of entrepreneurship, small business ownership and the overall economy. Neal's analysis, together with co-host Dr. Richard Roffman, a veteran 30-year publisher with extensive domestic and international experience, takes a non-biased approach based on real life experience in business as an American manufacturer and exporter. Made in America airs nationally each Saturday from 7-8:00 PM on Radio America. Link to Made in America at <http://www.nealasburysmadeinamerica.com>.



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