

Meijer links patriotism, change

By **SUSAN HARRISON**
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The most patriotic Americans work for constructive changes in society, Frederik G.H. Meijer told Muskegon County's 13 new naturalized citizens.

"And that's really the only message I have," the businessman said at the 25th annual American Ideals Luncheon Thursday noon. It was cosponsored by Muskegon Rotary Club and Women's Division of Muskegon Area Chamber of Commerce.

Meijer urged the new citizens, "with fresh outlooks and from different backgrounds," to be part of a change in America.

"Sure, we have pollution. We have discrimination against the handicapped, women and different races," he said. "We have the problem of density in the cities.

"We are coming to the same problems Europe had many years ago."

Meijer himself is a product of immigrant parents. He told the club members and guests of honor about their readjustment to American life and his father's emergence as a businessman.

Meijer, 56, is chairman of the board of Meijer, Inc. The corporation now owns 25 stores throughout Michigan.

"There are real consumerism problems today," said the man who fostered the idea for the giant discount centers that dot Michigan. "Part of that is our own lack of sensitivity to consumer needs. We bring on consumer problems by our own acts."

But those problems should be kept in proper context, he said, and be worked on. "You're not a good Ameri-

can if you only say things are great," he said.

Meijer also urged the life-time American citizens to be more understanding of persons with different racial and cultural backgrounds.

"If the world only had 1,000 people in it," he said, "Seven hundred of them would be non-white. Five hundred would go to bed hungry. Eight hundred would live in shacks and mud huts—quarters less adequate than we bed our animals in. That's the state of the world today."

The naturalized citizens were special guests at the luncheon. Meijer, a Grand Rapids resident, serves on the board of Michigan National Bank, the board and executive committee of Emergency Medical Services of West Michigan Comprehensive Health, is a Rotary Club member and serves on Gov. William Milliken's Committee on Financial Institutions.