



OUT OUR WAY

By J. R. Williams

States May Expand Toll Highways Heavy Traffic Problem Increasing

By BRUCE BLOSSAT

This is the greatest production year in the history of the automobile industry. In less than 10 months the motor makers have turned out 5,359,000 cars and trucks, smashing the 20-year record established in booming 1929.

The new peak was achieved despite numerous work stoppages. A shutdown forced by the current steel and coal strikes could not spoil the record, although some experts predict the factories will lose easily a month's output through depletion of their steel stocks.

The best guess now is that final 1949 production figures will range close to 5,800,000 units. And this huge outpouring must somehow be accommodated by already congested highways and parking facilities throughout the country.

What curve production will follow in the years ahead no one can tell for sure, of course. But Sumner Slichter, veteran economist, forecasts in the current Atlantic Monthly that by 1980 there will be two cars for every family in the United States. That would put the automobile population somewhere above 80,000,000, as compared with the present 41,000,000.

Even if only half this gain is realized, it will place burdens upon the nation's road network that will make today's traffic difficulties look like child's play. Some time soon the country is going to have to come to grips with this prospect in a far more realistic fashion than it has ever exhibited to date.

As Fortune Magazine points out in its November issue, the improvements made in our highway system since the war ended have put it back about where

it was in 1933—in terms of general condition and adequacy. We still have the 1933-1949 lag to make up before we start keeping pace with current advances in traffic volume.

As traffic mounts and population multiplies in our big cities, the cost of highway development becomes staggering. Every evidence indicates that normal sources of revenue will fall way short of meeting the needs of a sound system.

Either the nation must be prepared to face a stiff addition to its general tax bill or it must accept broader use of toll highways to get the required expansion.

Government officials frown on toll roads as wasteful, duplicating, and an extra tax burden on motorists. But state after state is turning to them for the answer to the pressing traffic puzzle. Tolls seem easier to impose than new general levies.

The outlook is no brighter when it comes to parking facilities. Cars by the thousands converge every day on the downtown areas of giant centers like New York, Chicago and Los Angeles. The flow in and out resembles the Sunday crawl that has long plagued holiday drivers. But the worst problem is that too often there is no place to put the car once you get it downtown.

A few cities have developed big underground garages as partial solutions. But unless huge new facilities are created soon

in many places, the downtown areas are likely to lose more and more business to outlying sectors where parking is possible.

Someone recently suggested the ultimate dilemma to which we may some day come in this jam-packed automobile age: a man will buy a car in a downtown showroom and find that he can't get it onto the street to drive home.

Maybe we ought to be glad steel shortages will cost us that one month's production. That's 500,000 fewer cars to clog the highways by Christmas.

NEW TRIAL ORDERED

SALEM, — (AP)—The State Supreme court has ordered a new trial in a case involving a special school election in Union county at which \$10,980 was voted.

E. O. Zeek brought the suit to have the election declared invalid.

The Circuit court of Judge Homer I. Watts held the election legal. But the Supreme court decision by Justice J. O. Bailey, called for a new trial.

FORESTER PROMOTED

PORTLAND, —(AP)—The Forest service promotion of Dahl J. Kirkpatrick was announced here. He will become chief of timber management for the southwestern region of the Forest Service with headquarters at Albuquerque, N. M., Jan. 1.

Kirkpatrick, a native of Tacoma, and a graduate of the University of Washington, has been in charge of the section of management and plans in the division of timber management in the Forest service office here.

The Supreme Court Chamber in Washington contains only 315 seats.

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This is our way of saying "Thanks" to everyone for your patronage and your kindness. We think giving favors to children is about the best way of expressing our thanks. So, fathers and mothers, make it a point to bring or send your children to 214 W. Cass St. (next to post office) this coming Saturday between 1 and 4 p. m. Gay, striped candy canes and colorful rubber balloons will be given away.

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