

Washington Digest

Reconversion No Great Obstacle to Industry

Many Factories Making Consumers Goods For Services; Numerous Others to Require Only Minor Changes.

By BAUKHAGE

News Analyst and Commentator.

WNU Service, Union Trust Building, Washington, D. C.

Reconversion has begun and it looks as if one prediction, made back when conversion had been accomplished with many an ache and groan, would come true. Then the experts predicted that reconversion would be easier than conversion.

Eighty per cent of the factories, we are now told by officials of the department of commerce, will not have to do a major reconversion job. This is largely because many industries now furnishing supplies to the military will continue to manufacture the same supplies for civilians—clothing, food, printing, electrical appliances—you can think of a whole lot of others yourself. It will be no great problem for the makers of such products to shift from one market to another—from Uncle Sam to John Q. Consumer.

Some industries whose present final product differs considerably from the civilian goods they make won't have such major difficulties either. It will please the ladies to learn that even the folks who have been making parachutes will have little or no trouble changing back to stockings. The nylon people simply have to change spools.

There are a number of other predictions concerning the future of businesses, big and little, and one of them is that 40 per cent of the industries, although they won't do the business they are doing today with Uncle Sam as a customer, will have a bigger demand to meet than they had in the boom year of 1929. And this condition will continue, say the prophets of profits, for two or three years on the impetus of the present pent-up buying power of the nation. If we keep our heads meanwhile, there is no reason why the period of prosperity cannot be extended.

But what about the other types of business which were expanded by war demands for products which won't have any civilian market? Well, our American business ingenuity and our native mechanical inventive genius, they tell us, are going to step into the picture again. Then there will be the natural evolution which will eliminate the below-average business man and establish a survival of the fittest.

Yankee Ingenuity To the Fore

What started me off on this topic was a typical example of how this inventive genius, stimulated by war demands, has laid the foundation for turning what started as a little two-room factory into a big, small-town business. The man with the inventive genius is a frequent Washington visitor these days. His name is Burl E. Sherrill. The name of the town is Peru, Ind., population 13,000. Sherrill is a modest Hoosier genius in his forties who managed to make a living from tinkering and selling the patents on the gadgets he invented. Then one day he made something he liked so well he didn't want to part with the idea behind it, so he decided to manufacture it himself. It was a popular-priced magnetic compass for use in steel-bodied automobiles and trucks.

Sherrill rented three offices right on the public square of Peru, turned them into his factory and started out. Soon he began to expand, pushing lawyers, doctors, real estate men out of the way. But I am getting ahead of my story.

Sherrill was a born inventor, although he didn't realize it and started off to study law. After two years at the University of Chicago he found that his hunger for the law was appeased, his hunger for three meals a day was not. He went to work managing a little neighborhood shoe store in Chicago. This gave him a chance to tinker in the kitchen-laboratory in his flat. Then he got a chance at a job back in Indiana—repairing radios in Peru. This gave him lots of opportunity to tinker and he patented inventions and sold them, which bolstered his income considerably. Finally he evolved the compass which he wouldn't part with. He was able to hire a small staff of workers—then came the war and no more civilian autos.

But there were lots of military vehicles and after our blind tanks had lost themselves in the African des-

erts, Washington found out about Sherrill and gave him the challenge of making a compass for use in motorized equipment of various kinds. Sherrill went to work and produced his models. The Carnegie Institute, the army engineers and the war college looked them over and put their okeh on them. The inventor moved downstairs and took the whole first floor of the building on Peru's public square. The 20 men who had assembled the auto compasses were increased to 125 working at a regular assembly line.

Next came a call from the Maritime commission. A compass for steel lifeboats was needed. Like the tanks, too many had been left to wander on the high seas blind. Further inventive genius was required for this job for a steel lifeboat passes much of its life on the steel deck of a ship. A few months ago the new compass was approved and production is now under way.

Some day, of course, the last war order will arrive at the factory in Peru, but because of the war-stimulated ingenuity of one man, a product has been created, the demand for which will continue for such war machines as are still needed plus a demand for civilian use which will return the moment restrictions on motor travel and transportation are over. In addition, I understand from Sherrill, a new hearing-aid is in the making.

War a Spur to Many Entrepreneurs

To reconvert to the manufacture of civilian products, no change of machinery or assembly line nor any retooling will be necessary at the Sherrill factory. Nor will the number of employees have to be reduced.

Of course, not many inventors are endowed with enough business sense to run plants of their own. Sherrill appears to be an exception. When he got his first army order, he was asked when he could deliver how many compasses. He named the figure and the day and what is more he lived up to his promise, which was more than many manufacturers with less foresight and more unforeseen hurdles have been able to do.

There are other inventors and other business men who, like Sherrill, have received from war demands the stimulation which will push them ahead and carry them through the breakers of reconversion. Sherrill himself has no technical education. He calls himself a graduate from a junkpile. But he can talk with the scientists and the experts and, what is more, he makes the pictures he draws on his drawing board, sometimes in the small hours in pajamas and slippers, work.

He has the typical American ingenuity shared by thousands of others who helped win the war for us and who will keep us from losing the peace.

Recently a listener wrote in with a suggestion that a fitting memorial for the late President Roosevelt could be provided in a manner which would aid the bond drive. She suggested that "if bonds were contributed for a memorial commensurate with our sorrow and regret, by the time these bonds matured we would be able to buy the most magnificent memorial in the world in honor of our greatest President."

Then she concludes: "I am one of the many 'little people' who would gladly contribute a small bond now, but may not be able to give anything later."

The psychology of that suggestion is interesting. Regardless of what the purpose of a fund might be, what a splendid way of raising it and thus achieving exactly what the government wishes to achieve by the sale of bonds: the double purpose of securing cash to defray war expenses and also reducing the amount of inflationary pocket-money.

It struck me as such a good idea that I sent it along to Ted Gamble who is in charge of such matters in connection with the Seventh War loan. Next to making suggestions for selling bonds I suppose one of the best things one can do is buy them. Of course if everybody followed that horse-sense plan and bought, simply for the security of their own future, the treasury wouldn't need any suggestions.

Kathleen Norris Says:

Shortening Sail at Your Home

Bell Syndicate—WNU Features.



If you are lucky to have a country retreat, where he can find peace and quiet, putter with farm machinery, raise chickens, milk cows, sell fruit, where he can take his loved wife, baby girls, books and forget the world for a while, thank God for it.

By KATHLEEN NORRIS

"How long must we put up with my husband's postwar disillusionment and discontent?" writes Mrs. Harry Kling of Chicago. "He came back four months ago, and after the first delight at having him home again, honorably discharged, it has been nothing but difficulty and gloom. He was always a well-balanced man, affectionate, steady and contented. He is now nervous, critical, or worse than all darkly silent for hours. He has gone back into his old firm of claim adjusters, and is making good money, with good prospects ahead. But I can't stand this sort of home life much longer. No harmony, no conversation, no plans, no fun. He is 35, I am 32; our daughters are 5 and 3.

"Harry wants to give up our comfortable apartment, where I have a part-time maid, break up all our pleasant associations, upset the girls' schooling—they go to all-day nursery schools—and move to the country. He has his eye on a sprawling farm 35 miles out, house in bad repair, 52 acres partly cultivated, tenant house of three rooms—the farmhouse has about seven rooms, electric light fixtures and plumbing 40 years old, and everything imaginable in the way of refrigerator, telephone, gas stove, linoleums, curtaining, painting, yet to be done. Here he proposes we live for years—perhaps forever. I adore my husband, I have not loved any other man since I met him, at 20, but do you think it wise to pull up all our roots simply because he has been emotionally and nervously upset by the war? Won't he outgrow this in time? Wouldn't it be wiser to wait, for the girls' sake and for all our sakes?"

My answer to this is, my dear Mrs. Kling, don't make the mistake of thinking that this fearful war, some of whose phases have ended, is like any other war that ever was. After peace negotiations with the powers of savagery and lawlessness are signed, sealed and delivered, we still have a titanic job ahead of us—service folk and civilians alike. This postwar job will not only be to preserve world peace, it will be to preserve world sanity.

A Shattered World.

It will not be only to keep a few hundred thousand depressed and mentally affected men sane; it will be to keep us all sane. This war has bitten too deep into the equilibrium of humanity; too much that is unthinkable and unbearable has happened. Europe will be peopled by millions of folk who have known what it was—for weeks, months, years—to be homeless, hungry, desperate. The sacred thing that is a man's right to work, to love, to serve his family, to build his home—has been outraged and destroyed.

Barren wastes of ashes and ruins will be wearily searched and combed by vaguely wandering hordes—children whose first experience of life was fright, fear, hunger. Women who have looked upon death, death in the mass, neaped hundreds of innocent women

MOVING TO THE COUNTRY

After returning from service Harry was able to return to his old position as a claim adjuster. He is earning a good salary and seemingly should be glad to get back into the old ways. His wife says she loves him as much as ever. They have two daughters, five and three, who are attending day nursery school.

Yet with all this, Harry is moody, unsociable and restless. He no longer is well balanced and light hearted. Something weighs him down. He wants to get away—from his job, the association of family and friends, the familiar scenes.

Lately he has fixed his mind on going into farming. He has found a 52-acre place somewhat rundown, and only partly cultivated at present. There are two houses on it, one of three rooms, the other seven. Both are in poor condition. It is here, 35 miles from town, that Harry wants to move his family. Harry's wife doesn't like the prospects.

and children slain, and lying unburied in what once were grassy parks and splendid streets.

Nothing like this ever has happened in the world before. Try to realize that we will not only be fighting, in these years to come, for those alien peoples overseas, we will be fighting with every humane and scientific weapon in our power for ourselves. That honor and charity and service may live on in the world, that homes and firesides, books and schools and tree-shaded towns may still exist, that our hearts and souls shall not be ravaged again by the fearful cruelties man may inflict upon his fellowman, will take all that we have of courage and vision and hard, humble labor.

A Country Retreat.

Your man has done his share. He has jeopardized his reason in these years when you and the babies waited for him, safe and snug in protected America. Now you three persons whom he loves must give him back those years.

If you are lucky enough to have a country retreat, where he can putter with farm machinery, raise chickens, milk cows, sell fruit; where he can take his loved wife, his books, his baby girls, and forget the great world for awhile, thank God for it. Take it gratefully, and as he grows stronger and saner you'll see how he longs to share it, to let other wounded souls and bodies rest under his big trees, to let other bewildered soul-scarred men fish his stream, help harvest his corn, sleep deep in the country guest room shaded by the pear trees.

We are going to find some big words for what we have to do for our men now. Teaching, helping, cheering, healing. Begin with your own. Forget all the past, as Europe must. Think only of a better tomorrow, and do your share to make it come true.

Preventing Tooth Decay

Fluorine solutions, mouthwashes and fluoride in drinking water are under experimentation. A poisonous element not to be trifled with, fluorine in extremely small amounts has prevented dental decay. Citizens of Kingston, N. Y., a city on the Hudson river, will drink fluoride-containing water while their neighbors down the line in Newburgh will get ordinary water. After a few years, dental comparisons should reveal whether other cities should fortify their water too.



His loved wife, his baby girls.

HOUSEHOLD HINTS

Stacking cups one on top of the other is not good practice. Prevent breaking handles off by hanging them on hooks in the cupboard.

To remove cigarette stains from brass ash trays, rub the trays with a paste of salt and vinegar. Then wash well in hot water and soap suds.

If the contents of a tube of shaving cream or tooth paste have hardened, hold the tube under hot water for a short time. This will soften the paste.

A little turpentine on a soft cloth will remove all dirt film from and give a gloss to an enameled bedstead.

Hot water is better than cold to soak dried fruit and requires only half the time for soaking.

To repair a hole left in the wall by a nail, take equal parts of salt and starch, just enough to make a good patching plaster. Fill the holes and they will be neatly covered.

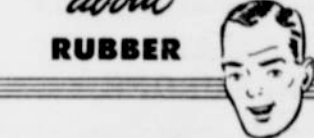
MAKE ICE CREAM

At home—Any flavor—Delicious—Smooth—No ice crystals—No cooking—No re-whipping—No scorched flavor—Easy—Inexpensive—20 recipes in each 15¢ pkg. Please send this ad for free full-size sample offer, or buy from your grocer.

LONDONDERRY Brand Homemade Ice Cream STABILIZER

LONDONDERRY—835 HOWARD SAN FRANCISCO 3, CALIF.

SNAPPY FACTS about RUBBER



Synthetic rubber, as used in rubber gloves made by B. F. Goodrich, is superior to natural rubber. The new "service gloves" are impervious to strong soap, oils and cleaning fluids that deteriorate natural rubber.

Two synthetic rubber plants operated by The B. F. Goodrich Company have produced 300,000,000 pounds of synthetic rubber. This is equivalent to the normal yield of 28,000,000 Far Eastern Rubber trees, requiring the services of 79,000 natives for the same period of time the plants have been in operation. The two plants employ about 1,200 men and women.

B. F. Goodrich

In war or peace B.F. Goodrich FIRST IN RUBBER



MARY MARTIN

Star of "True to Life," a Paramount picture, is one of the many well-groomed, well-informed Hollywood stars who use Calox Tooth Powder. McKesson & Robbins, Inc., Bridgeport, Conn.

CALOX TOOTH POWDER

WOMEN '38 to '52' are you embarrassed by HOT FLASHES?

If you suffer from hot flashes, feel weak, nervous, high-strung, a bit blue at times—due to the functional "middle-age" period peculiar to women—try this great medicine—Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound to relieve such symptoms. Pinkham's Compound HELPS NATURE. It's one of the best known medicines for this purpose. Follow label directions.

Gay and Practical Sun Suit for a Tot



Comfortable Sun Suit

SHE is much too cool and comfortable to care what the temperature is! Lucky little girl to have such a sensible, practical and pretty play suit. The ric rac trimmed bolero can be slipped on to prevent too much sunbanning on a tiny back and shoulders.

To obtain complete pattern, cherry applique pattern for pocket, finishing instructions for the sun suit and bolero (Pattern No. 5883) sizes 2, 3, 4 years included, send 16 cents in coin, your name, address and the pattern number.

SEWING CIRCLE NEEDLEWORK 709 Mission St., San Francisco, Calif. Enclose 16 cents for Pattern No. 5883 Name Address

ASK ME ANOTHER?

A General Quiz

The Questions

1. What is Inisfail?
2. What is the legal status of Indians in Canada?
3. What is the difference between a stogy and a stogie?
4. In a newspaper, what is a spreadhead?
5. What is the oldest public park in the United States?
6. How many wings do bees have?
7. What does maladdress mean?
8. What is the world's largest bridge?

The Answers

1. A poetic name for Ireland.
2. They are minors.
3. A stogy is a coarse boot or shoe; a stogie is a slender cigar.
4. A headline that runs over two or more columns.
5. Boston Commons, in Boston.
6. Four.
7. Awkwardness or rudeness in speech; a lack of politeness or tact.
8. Oakland Bay bridge in San Francisco.

Kool-Aid Makes 10 BIG DRINKS 6 Delicious FLAVORS Kool-Aid 5¢

Tastes Great Any Time!

Kellogg's CORN FLAKES

"The Grains Are Great Foods" Kellogg's

Kellogg's Corn Flakes bring you nearly all the protective food elements of the whole grain declared essential to human nutrition.

Kellogg's CORN FLAKES

BARBS . . . by Baukhage

An official navy bulletin included this warning: "Navy personnel are not allowed to transport monkeys to or from India."

The government has moved west from the Hudson, one congressman commented. Fine so long as it doesn't stop when it gets to the Mississippi. This is a very wide country.

Sale of horse meat is reported on the increase. If that's the case we'd better end this gasoline shortage soon.

A medal was recently awarded to a high officer for saving the life of a woman by stopping a runaway horse 20 years ago. Which shows he was faster at catching up with what he was after than his medal.