

Main Streeters Decide To Do Something About Shopping Centers Getting Business

New York — The shopping center boom is cutting into main street's market. Downtown merchants are in a fighting mood.

Main street retailers are the first to admit they are losing trade to the centers. But there is less gloom about the future than determination to do something about it. After all, they reason, main street sprang up in the first place because it was a natural trade center.

Main street tends to be nearer the center of population than shopping centers and offers wider variety and comparative shopping. This competition brings not only better buyers but lower prices, down town leaders say.

Confident they are here to stay, main streeters across the country are borrowing the centers' biggest attraction — easier parking.

The change in main street is becoming more and more evident. It ranges from the leveling of "white elephant" buildings or use of vacant lots for parking areas to major clearance projects designed to turn downtown into virtually a shopping center itself.

The full backing of town

fathers for such projects goes without saying. Predictions by shopping center promoters that main street will turn into an economic slum bring nightmares of vanishing tax dollars.

Business Picks Up
In Chicago, the Englewood business community on the south side enlisted the cooperation of the city government when shopping centers and other shopping districts began to cut too heavily into profits. Englewood business-

Field Mouse Plague Claimed About Over

Portland — The field mouse plague in parts of Oregon, California, Nevada and Idaho is about over, according to Donald A. Spencer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologist.

Spencer said the four-year cycle of "microtus," the common meadow mouse, has passed its peak and the rodent population can be expected to return to relatively harmless levels this spring.

After an on-the-spot study of the infestation Spencer estimated less than 1000 mice per acre in areas of heavy rodent population. He listed rodent "hot spots" as three eastern Oregon counties, Tulelake in northern California, Carson valley in Nevada and the Boise and Payette valleys in Idaho.

The plague, termed worst of its kind in nearly four decades, resulted in considerable damage to crops, Spencer said, because farmers had no experience with the problem.

men got the city to install six new parking lots with a total capacity of 1,200 cars. Since then, business has been on the upturn.

The Jamaica business district in New York City's Borough has already begun to fight with a massive public relations campaign and area-wide sales days. An advertising campaign invites shoppers to "Jamaica — Long Island's largest shopping center."

The immediate necessity, a chamber spokesman said, is to keep the present customers from straying. Luring new customers, a long range plan, will undoubtedly involve new parking lots and a major face-lifting, the spokesman said.

"The pedestrian traffic was just disappearing despite good bus connections," he said. "We had to do something and everyone finally realized it."

Dramatic Fight
One of the most dramatic fights for main street survival is being waged in New Haven, Conn., where energetic Mayor Richard C. Lee is leading a \$130 million campaign of "total redevelopment." Part of

INFANTRY STILL NEEDED
Moehringen, Germany — Maj. Gen. Herbert Powell, commander of the U. S. Army Infantry School at Ft. Benning, Ga., said Tuesday the foot soldier would be needed "until a B52 bomber can occupy a city or a submarine can get to a hill." Powell told a conference of 300 infantry officers from five NATO countries that the world couldn't survive the Sputnik age, "but it forgets that the foot soldier is still the ultimate answer in any battle."

the campaign is slum clearance and highway building. But a substantial aim is to clear the "for rent" signs.

The Urban Land Institute, a real estate advisory organization, recommends that main street retailers be bold about their planning. Main street should be turned into a mall if possible, allowing only public transit vehicles where autos once crowded, ULI recommends.

Large areas behind stores fronting on main street should be cleared for generous parking space, the institute says. Traffic should be routed around the edges of the "shopping center."

No Left Turn
Main streeters maintain their stores can be made even more accessible than the shopping centers once the parking problem is met. Main street's parking lots can be reached with nary a left turn — a menace the novice woman driver will go a long way to avoid. Many shopping centers are built on a feeder of one major arterial highway, meaning somewhere around half of its customers have to turn left to get in.

Not many of the "Operation Shopping Center" projects are so ambitious as to take the Urban Land Institute's advice and tear down all the buildings around a hard core of main street shops but most downtown associations are going at least part way.

Some of the changes are small — scale and haphazard. Others are bold and carefully planned. But the change is inevitable. Economic law is inevitable and the jet age is writing the laws.

MEDFORD TRIBUNE

MEDFORD, OREGON, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15, 1958



SPACE AGE BUDGET—Federal Budget Director Percival F. Brundage points to chart entitled "More \$ for Missiles" during a press seminar in Washington on President Eisenhower's budget message to Congress. The budget calls for a record peacetime spending \$73.9 billion.

Research Grant To University OK'd

Washington (P)—Sen. Richard L. Neuberger (D-Ore.) said today a research grant of \$1,250,000 toward construction of a medical research building at the University of Oregon medical school in Portland had been approved in principle.

The National Advisory Council on Health Research Facilities. Neuberger said final allocation of funds would depend on the priority assigned the project in competing for \$30 million budgeted for this phase of the National Institute of Health grants program for the fiscal year starting next July.

1. He said about \$50 to \$60 million worth of undertakings would be competing for the \$30 million unless the appropriation can be expanded. Neuberger added that it was possible Oregon's grant might be delayed until the fiscal year starting July 1, 1959, because the Oregon legislature does not meet until next year to appropriate the state's share of matching funds.

Burglary Reported In Central Point

Central Point—The Triple Milling company 2220 South Highway 99, Central Point, was broken into during the week end and about \$150 worth of tools taken, according to Central Point police.

Police said the thieves, apparently familiar with the building and its contents, knocked the hasp off the tool shed to gain entrance.

Police said the break-in was not discovered until Monday afternoon when Eugene Konopasek, 6804 Agate rd., Medford, went to unlock the toolshed door. The hasp had been replaced by the thieves so the outside appearance of the door would look untampered, according to Central Point police.

CHORUS MASTER DIES

Ferrara, Italy—Vittore Veneziani, 79, chorus master of La Scala opera in Milan for 33 years before his retirement in 1954, died here Monday.

NOVELIST'S KIN DIES

Montgomery, Ala. — Minnie Machen Sayre, 95, mother-in-law of the late novelist F. Scott Fitzgerald, died at her home here Monday. Mrs. Sayre's daughter, Zelda, who died in 1948, was Fitzgerald's wife. Mrs. Sayre was the daughter of Sen. Willis B. Machen of Kentucky and widow of Alabama Supreme Court Justice Anthony D. Sayre.

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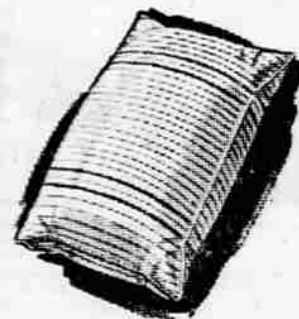
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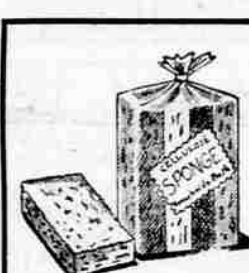
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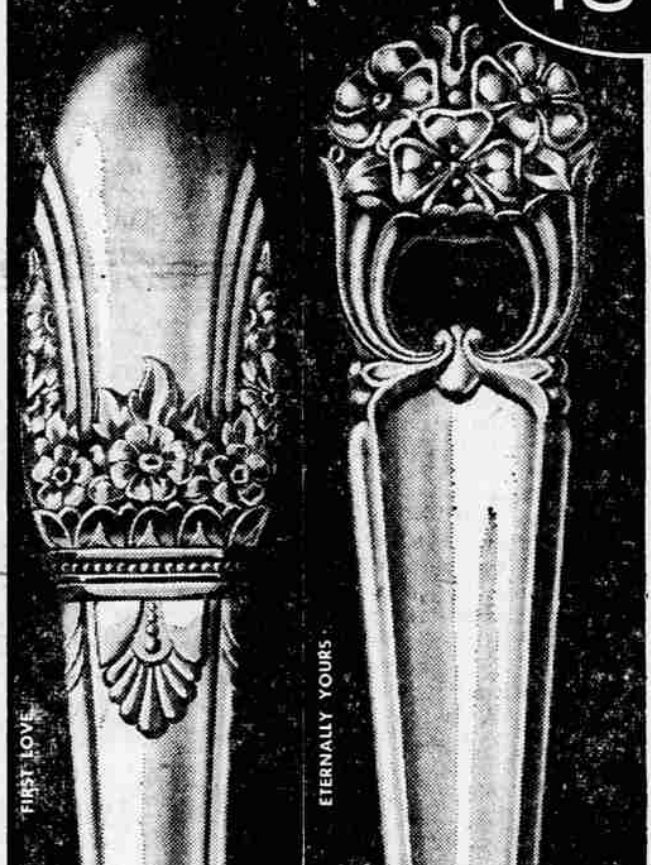
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