

Demands Increase For Mandatory Language Courses

Washington—(AP)—The demand that foreign languages be an integral part of the public educational system is on the increase.

At present, in most high schools foreign language study is an "elective"—the student is allowed a choice of whether to take a foreign language.

In past years the only language study available to students has been at the high school level. But due to the increased international activity of Americans, many educators now insist that foreign language study begin for every student at the elementary school level when the child is between 7 and 10 years old.

The National Education Association Journal in its September issue said that, "compelled with this interest is the belief that it is easier to learn languages before adolescence than afterwards."

"The elementary school years have considerable potential for shaping attitudes toward other peoples. Experiences with other cultures, including their languages, are therefore a valid part of the elementary program," the NEA publication said.

Not justified

However, the Journal said that a foreign language program is not justified in the elementary school if it encroaches on the need of the school to provide adequate instruction in the basic courses of the English language, mathematics, and science.

This is the argument generally used against the teaching of other languages beginning in the elementary school. One U.S. educator, Jacob Ornstein, the author of several books on the subject of language, said in "The American Scholar" early this year that it must be through the schools that the situation be corrected.

"It would require the introducing of a modern language in the elementary school and its continuation for from six to ten years—through high school and part of college. There is nothing visionary about such an objective when compared with many small and less prosperous nations succeed in equipping their young people with not only several languages," Ornstein said.

Ornstein also called for the abolition of old-fashioned teaching methods, to be replaced with audio-visual devices in language laboratories. Such laboratories now are being introduced into many American high schools, colleges and universities. They usually consist of individual tape recorders, microphones and booths to enable the student to practice both speaking and listening comprehension of the language.

Many educators say that the students, teachers and employers are being made aware of the fact that the knowledge of foreign languages is a necessity, thus creating a demand for language instruction.

In addition, they point out that many Americans have found through personal contact abroad that it is an embarrassment to be unable to converse in a language other than English, especially when many persons in other countries can speak English as well as their mother tongue.

An indication of the increased demand is that 18.5 per cent of all public high school students now elect to take foreign language instruction, compared with 13.7 per cent a decade ago. Many of these students take the instruction, officials said, to fulfill requirements for college entrance and to get a "head start" on collegiate foreign language requirements.

In order to facilitate this instruction, the National Defense Education act of 1958 makes available \$887 million for a four-year program in the development of science, mathematics and language training.

In addition, at several conferences recently national leaders in many fields have sought solutions to the problem of language deficiency.



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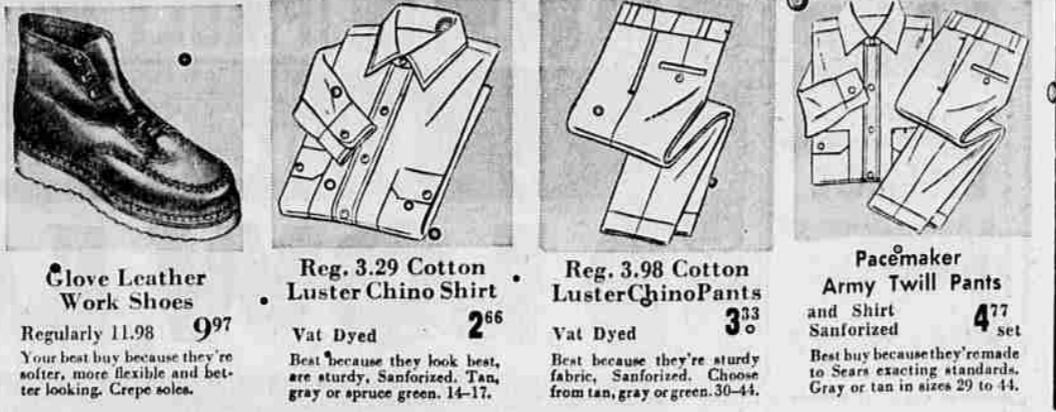
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Radior Beacon Use In Planes Possible

Ann Arbor, Mich. (Science Service)—Radior beacons, called transponders, already used in military aircraft, could be installed in major commercial planes with better resultant visibility.

Calling for a crash program to improve the nation's air traffic control system, Prof. Paul M. Fitts of the University of Michigan's department of psychology here, said much better voice communication also is needed between pilots and ground control centers.

Prof. Fitts said this can be done with existing equipment, but that the U.S. should have a long-range research program in flight safety.



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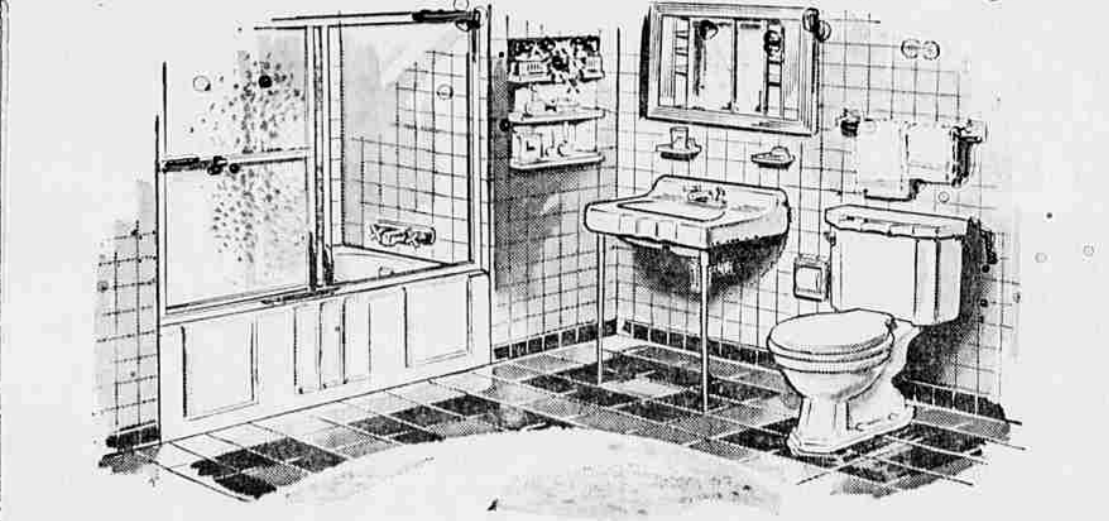
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More Branches Is 1960 Development In Retail Trade

New York—(AP)—The trend to business and to more and more branch stores and franchises continues to be the story in retail trade in 1960.

Although retail trade was quite solid in some parts of the country, many retailers held up better than a manufacturing and most other business. Department store shares, for example, outperformed industrials on the stock exchange through most of the year.

Indicated retail sales for the whole year were about \$220 billion, which would be up perhaps 2.5 per cent from 1959. The increase was all in soft goods — sales of which in November were still running 3.8 per cent ahead of 1959. On the other hand, buying of durables — appliances, furniture, etc., was down 1.5 per cent.

Installation credit at retail stores rose early in the year but began leveling off sharply in August.

The department stores seemed sure to end up the year with a 2 per cent gain over '59 — largely the result of setting up more and more branches in the better suburban shopping centers. However, the long slump in sales definitely was checked at large downtown stores.

The rate of chain store expansion leveled off from recent years but franchising store expansion, especially in restaurants, kept up at a great rate.

Independent merchants continued to do well in older urban locations, but 1 in a 5 in costs and conditions in the new suburban shopping centers proved too steep for independents in most cases. They were frozen out.

Virtually all retail trade also experienced an ever-tightening profit squeeze in 1960 as competition grew tougher and wages and other costs went up.

The food stores, which always have lived in small profit margins, were able to withstand this squeeze best, and they had the best year of all. They suffered no decline in demand — indeed people appeared to be eating more of anything — so the grocers were able to maintain reasonable sales-earnings ratios.

Sales Gains

In the mail order field, the giants, Sears, Roebuck and Montgomery Ward each had indicated sales gains of about 3.5 per cent.

But both yelped over the profit squeeze. The aggressive Alden and Spiegel chains racked up sales increases above 10 per cent on heavy promotion and new credit plans.

The variety stores, Woolworth, Kresge, Kresge, etc., continued in a state of flux, changing from their old status of "dime stores" to "junior department stores," and adding many new units in the suburban shopping centers.

Their aggregate monthly sales ran well ahead of 1959 through most of the 1960 months so far reported.

MIT Grading System Had Next to Nothing

Cambridge, Mass.—(AP)—A founder of Massachusetts Institute of Technology believed in calling a spade a spade when marking his students.

William Barton Rogers, who founded the school a century ago, established this grade system: G for good, S for satisfactory, P for poor, and N for "next to nothing."

EXPRESS RATES UP

Washington—(AP)—A 20-cent rate increase on some railway express shipments went into effect today. The increase, approved Wednesday by the Interstate Commerce Commission, applies to less-than-carload shipments between all points on most commodities. Milk, cream and daily newspapers are exempted.

PLANS DESEGREGATION

Johnson City, Tenn.—(AP)—The City School Board here approved a three-year plan of public school desegregation Wednesday even though there have been no lawsuits acting to end racial separation in city schools. The program may begin at the start of the next school year.

CELEBRATE BIRTHDAY

Guatemala City—The 50th Central American republic— El Salvador—celebrates its 50th birthday today. The republic was founded in 1821.

TAUGHT AT HOME

Chicago—About 10 per cent of the licensed engineers in the U.S. have been taught at home. The correspondence courses...