

# Play Produced in 1921 Unfolded Story of Mechanical Man

By HARRY FERGUSON  
Lead PLAY—9 Col Hed

WASHINGTON (UPI)—Poets and playwrights frequently are years ahead of scientists in predicting the shape of things to come. In 1921 a play by Karel Capek called "R.U.R. — Rossum's Universal Robots" was produced in Prague and unfolded the story of how an army of mechanical men rebelled and destroyed their creators.

It was not a sensational hit, largely because most people thought the idea of mechanical men was so far-fetched as to be laughable. The robots in the play had human form, intelligence, strength and memory, but were devoid of feeling.

If "R.U.R." were produced today, few people would laugh. The idea of machines doing the work of human beings hits too close to home for millions of

workers. The word for it is "automation" and it is a lightning word. It spreads fear. A few years ago workers in several Midwest industrial cities were asked to list the things they feared most. Russia came first and automation second, but it is an even-money bet that if a poll were taken today the order would be reversed.

Those who don't fear automation are irritated by it. The other day Sen. Paul Douglas, D-Ill., delivered a whither-are-we-drifting-view with alarm speech. He said some men in California had invented a machine called Electro-com which could dial your telephone number, deliver a sales pitch, say goodbye and hang up. If your line happened to be busy, the machine would wait three minutes and dial again.

"Our personal rights would be invaded," Douglas said. "Our personal lives would suffer and many would boycott any product of a manufacturer who applied such obnoxious sales technique in their home."

Maybe so, but it is going to take more than angry speeches in the United States Senate to halt the march of automation. The man who argues

against automation is, in the final result, arguing against progress. To stop the development of automation could be disastrous to the United States in the cold war. Russia established a ministry of automation in 1956. It already has about 20 automated factories and is pushing hard for more. American corporations are selling their computers all over Western Europe.

Progress demands that scientists have complete freedom of action in developing whatever their ingenuity can devise. It is just as illogical to demand a halt to automation as it is to tell medical researchers they must stop their search for a cure for cancer.

Automation was born out of dire danger to the nation. It was developed to speed up the production of airplanes and tanks in World War II. It played a part in the development of the atomic bomb and it was indispensable in making the giant leap from the atomic to the hydrogen bomb. It released men from factories and sent them to the fighting fronts.

It would be natural to assume that labor unions would be in the forefront of those opposing the development of automation, but such is not the case. No leader of a big union is on record as fighting automation as such, but all of them are demanding that the nation act now and decisively to prepare for the day when the machines will throw an intolerable number of men out of work. That is the real drive behind the demand of the unions for a 35-hour work week without reduction in pay.

"Though society cannot smash the machines, we must take whatever steps are needed to insure that the machines will not smash society," says A. J. Hayes, head of the machinist union, and that neatly sums up the worries of the unions. But tempers are getting short, and the other day George Meany, president of the AFL-CIO, complained to his national convention that the big corporations were ignoring the consequences of automation.

"Every big corporation in America is in a mad race to produce more and more with less and less labor. Their plans for expansion are staggering. Every one of them calls for more and more push-button operation with machines to pull the buttons. There has got to be a change in thinking. Many eventually supply more jobs. I don't know what they have to prove this, but I am quite sure a good many sincerely believe it. But what happens until that takes place? Do we get our chasing power from push buttons?"

The late President Kennedy, projecting the requirements for a stable, prosperous economy, said in the near future the nation would have to open up 10,000 jobs a day. The population explosion and the desire of women to work is expanding the labor force at a tremendous rate. Last month the rate of unemployment in this country rose to 5.9 per cent, which means 3.9 million persons couldn't find a job.

One economist said he occasionally had nightmares, but the scene was always the same: "I see thousands of persons clamoring at factory gates trying to get in and apply for jobs. But they can't get in because the doors are crowded with people carrying pink discharge slips who are trying to get out."

## Farm Price Dispute In Common Market Remains Unsettled

A dispute over farm prices between France and West Germany that could wreck the Common Market shows no solution in sight.

The crisis deepened when France and Germany, the market's two most powerful nations, indicated they had no intention of backing down.

In Paris, the cabinet endorsed President Charles de Gaulle's implied threat to quit the Common Market if the six-nation economic community fails to agree on a joint farm policy by Dec. 31.

The cabinet sent Agriculture Minister Edgard Pisani back to today's talks in Brussels with firm instructions to insist on the deadline.

**De Gaulle Pulls France out of Common Market**

In Bonn, Chancellor Ludwig Erhard's cabinet confirmed its defiance of De Gaulle's stand by demanding that the Common Market agree on a unified stand at next year's world tariff talks at the same time it works out the farm price question.

If De Gaulle pulls France out of the Common Market or boycotts its ministerial sessions, the community could collapse—not only as a trading bloc, but as a force for carrying out the dream of European unity.

Such a breakdown would also leave the market nations without an effective voice in the Geneva tariff talks next May, crippling the talks and perhaps choking Western economic growth.

There appeared little likelihood that agreement could be reached before the Common Market foreign ministers are scheduled to meet in Brussels starting Wednesday.

**Want Low Prices**

France, with Europe's largest food production surpluses, is pushing for a common farm policy based on low prices and small government subsidies. It would like to give its farmers more access to food markets in Germany and other market nations, thus raising farm income and placating the rebellious French farmers.

This would also give France a dominant position in Europe.

**Foreign Aid Bill Again on Agenda**

WASHINGTON (UPI)—Congress today began what leaders hope will be final week of this congressional session confronted with the mangled foreign aid bill.

Congress, which already has authorized a \$3.6 billion aid program to continue another year of economic and military help to other nations, still must appropriate the money. The House Appropriations Committee has approved a reduced \$2.8 billion appropriation bill that House leaders were expected to debate today.

Despite pleas by President Johnson and other government officials to restore funds to the trimmest measure, leaders apparently planned no battle to replace the money.

The administration originally had requested \$4.5 billion, but Congress refused to authorize more than \$3.6 billion. Any drive to restore the money appeared hopeless to House leaders who apparently have decided to concentrate on preventing further cuts during House debate.

**LBJ Urges Stronger U.S.-Italy Ties**

WASHINGTON (UPI)—President Johnson said today that he will do all he can to make the relationship between their two countries "even stronger."

In a message of congratulations to the new premier announced Friday, Johnson said he hoped he would have a chance to meet with Moro before too long.

**HONORS GLENN MILLER**

LONDON (UPI)—The "Glenn Miller Appreciation Society" announced today it will hold a six-and-a-half-hour session of recorded Glenn Miller music Sunday, 19th anniversary of the American bandleader's death.

### Officials Confer on Reduction of Forces

MADRID (UPI)—Spanish Vice President Agustin Munoz Grandes conferred with U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Stanley J. Donovan Friday night on projected reduction of American garrisons at jointly operated bases in Spain.

Informed sources said the talks centered on reductions at the big Strategic Air Command base at Zaragoza, which was expected to be turned over to the Spanish military forces during 1964.

The French want price regulations on beef, veal, rice and dairy products completed by the end of the year. They also want agreement on a single common market farm fund to replace national subsidies and price support payments.



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**Cottage** **Cut Green Beans** 303 Tin **6 for 95¢**

**Hunts** **Fruit Cocktail** 303 Tin **4 for 1.00**

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**EXPORTS REACH HIGH**

PORTLAND (UPI)—Log exports from the Pacific Northwest to Japan reached an all-time high of 321 million board feet for the third quarter of 1963, the U.S. Forest Service said Saturday.