

Machine Tool Makers Face Slump With Hopeful Plans

BY SAM DAWSON
CLEVELAND (AP) — An industry notorious for valleys and peaks—the machine tool builders who make possible all your wonderful new gadgets and models—sees another of those valleys looming up today. But this time it sees a chance of throwing a bridge across it.

Industry leaders hope the bridge can be fashioned out of three things:

1. Competition among its customers which will make them seek new products and cost-cutting machinery to beat the recession.
2. The unusually high percentage of out-of-date tools many of them are using just now.
3. A recent turning by some tool-makers themselves toward redesigning of machinery to catch up with their potential customers' yen to bring out new products.

The hopes are there. And a good case can be made for the opportunity the machine tool industry has to sell more, even during a general business slowdown.

But the slumps today still point to a valley.

New orders are coming in at only half the rate of a year ago. The backlog of unfinished orders is just about half what it was last year. Shipments are still high, but unless either the government or their civilian customers step up their ordering soon, shipments will start piling out this summer and fall. And the industry, as a whole, will be in the valley.

Current defense requirements take only a fraction of the machine tool industry's present capacity. The military purchasing agents haven't been ordering so far this year at the rate the tool builders expected.

Also, as a result of past war and defense programs, the government owns about one machine tool in every seven in the United States today. Machine tool makers wish they knew what the government is going to do with them—stockpile them, lease them to various industries or sell some of them as surplus.

Herbert L. Tigges, president of the National Machine Tool Builders Assn. and executive vice president of Baker Brothers, Inc., Toledo, says that while government defense needs will stay fairly stable for several years, the industry will have to look to the replacement of tools in civilian goods factories from now on if it's going to avoid too deep a valley.

He cites "the greatest accumulated obsolescence in metal-cutting and metal-forming equipment in the nation's history" as giving his industry its biggest chance. He says the industry's customers are so hotly competitive right now that cost-consciousness is making them seek new tools.

But he wants his own industry to speed up its rate of redesign. He says the recent periods of emergency and shortages tended to freeze the designs of models. He thinks new tools can find new customers.

Shipments so far this year have totaled about 400 million dollars. Some manufacturers say, on the basis of orders, they can see only about 200 million dollars more coming up the rest of the year—unless the government or civilian factories change ordering policies.

If the total for the year comes to 600 million dollars, it would be only about half of last year's output, and considerably below earlier expectations for 1954.

Misery Of Korea Told After Trip

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Korea "appears to be a nation of orphans and disabled veterans," Henry J. Mahady, national commander of the American Veterans of World War II, said today on his return from Korea.

"Nothing can describe the misery and horror of the war's impact on the Koreans," the Amvets commander said.

"We can't let them go by default to the Communists, whose only secret of success is that they've come to feed hungry people at the opportune time."

The attorney from Latrobe, Pa., was one of six representatives of veterans organizations who toured Korea in connection with the 20-million-dollar relief drive of the veterans committee of the American-Korean Foundation.

Former Opera Star Left Small Estate

NEW YORK (AP)—Fritzi Scheff, who once made as much as \$4,000 a week during her operatic and light opera career, left an estate of less than \$1,000.

Miss Scheff died last April 9 at the age of 74. The Viennese-born actress and singer was the toast of two continents 40 years ago. She often traveled by private railroad car and took over an entire floor when stopping at hotels.

In her 1950 will filed for probate yesterday, she bequeathed her estate to a cousin, Dr. Alfred P. Scheff, and a ring to a friend, Lyman Brown, both of New York.

RIOT
TEHRAN, Iran (AP)—Official sources said five Communist prisoners were shot dead and a number of others wounded at Resht, north of Tehran, yesterday when soldiers put on a prison riot. The prisoners had objected to being locked in their cells.



JET, two-year-old Labrador, and his owner, Edna Pentecost, Route 1 Box 407 (on Airway). He will be entered in the obedience trials at the show to be held at the fairgrounds Sunday, May 16, for all purebred dogs and puppies. The Klamath Kennel Club, Inc., and Dog Fanciers, Inc., are sponsors of the dog sanction match and obedience trials. Doors open at 10 a.m. Public is invited.

ATOMIC FISH
OSAKA, Japan (AP)—This city had another "hot fish" scare Thursday as fish caught 2,000 miles west of the Bikini H-Bomb testing grounds were found to be radioactive, Kyodo News Service reported.

Auto Insurance rates have been reduced. See Hans Norland, 627 Pine St.

Russian Birth Rate Said Lower Than That Of U.S.

NEW YORK (AP)—Good evidence indicates the Russian birth rate today is a little lower than that of the United States.

The Soviet government for many years has taken costly measures to encourage fertility. There are baby bonuses and pensions and also special medals for Russian women who rear big families. There are subsidies for baby clothing and lots of other benefits to make childbearing and child rearing easier.

The Soviet government outlawed abortions—once legal in Russia. It makes birth control devices of such low quality that in effect it discourages voluntary limitation on the size of families.

But, judging by population figures which have become available through official Soviet sources, the Russian birth rate has not kept pace with that of the United States.

The Russians have announced their net increase in population in current years is three million to 3,200,000 a year.

Deputy Premier Anastase Mikoyan in addition recently announced the 1953 death rate as 8.9 persons per thousand.

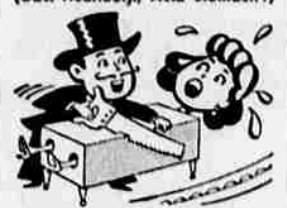
Comparison of these two Soviet figures—taking into consideration that immigration and emigration in the Soviet Union are both insignificant—leads to an estimate that in 1953 about five million Soviet children were born and that the birth rate is about 24 per 1,000.

The total number of births in the United States in 1953 has been announced by the U. S. Census Bureau as nearly four million and the birth rate was around 25 per

1,000. The U.S. death rate in 1953 was 9.6 per 1,000.

If the Russian claim to a lower death rate is true, this represents a major accomplishment. No more than 25 years ago Russian death rates were double the U.S. rate. There has been real improvement in Soviet health services and sanitation. Also, many adults and aged

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people died in Russia during World War II, on the front and in the rear areas, so the population nowadays is comparatively young in average age.

There are around 210 million Soviet citizens and 162 million Americans. The Soviet population, if official claims are correct, is growing by a little over three millions a year while the U.S. population increased by 2,700,000 in 1953.

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