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Christmas Business Prospects

As we approach the Christmas season, business continues its march forward on practically all fronts. It is true there have been some sharp reverses in the security markets of late, but they have been due, not to the business situation, but largely to the severely strained relations between this counry and Germany—an immensely serious matter whose end is not yet in sight, and whose ultimate effect on commerce and trade cannot now be accurately forecast.

A glance over the complete figures for October shows it to have been a very good month in almost all lines. In some, it was exceptionally good. This same favorable trend extended into the first three weeks of November, and there seems no reason why it should change in the near future. One of the best signs is the fact that rise in demand for certain basic products, such as steel, has been materially greater than the rise in production. This indicates that further gains in activity may be confidently expected before long. And, of equal importance, the inventory situation, which was extremely bad last spring, is steadily improving.

It is obvious that the anti-administration gains in the last general election have pleased and heartened a large segment of business which has been worried and afraid of what it considers New Deal extremism. It is almost unanimously forecast that the next Congress will be highly conservative, in comparison to its immediate predecessors, and that the President will be forced to compromise his reform program.

Some briefs of interest follow:

CONSTRUCTION: Building in Oct. touched the highest peak in a number of years. Unusual activity is found in the residential field. Future steady improvement is expected here, and also in industrial construction.

ELECTRIC POWER: Output is at good levels for the season. The utilities new expansion program is slowly getting underway. The apparent truce reached between this industry and the Administration is an encouring factor.

AGRICULTURE: Is still a comparatively dark spot in an otherwise brightening economic picture. As this column has observed before, the government's farm program has suffered practically complete collapse. On the other hand, farm income for the year will reach a fairly good total and no crisis in agriculture is to be expected.

PRICES: Commodity prices have been strengthening, but most authorities regard them as being still too low in the light of the gains in industrial activity. Gradual rises over a considerable period of time are anticipated.

RETAIL TRADE: Is improving in most sections of the country, along with purchasing power. Many stores are revising their buying programs, in the belief that sales will be substantially greater this winter and spring than seemed possible a few months ago.

TRANSPORTATION: Railroad carloadings are tending upward, but the industry's financial position remains almost as precarious as before. Hopes are pinned to a large extent on possible congressional action to alleviate some of the lines' troubles.

It is an interesting and important fact that no one seems to expect recovery to attain boom proportions. Most experts think that the rate of improvement will be comparatively slow—that we are in a steady, long-pull trend.

The Elections

The elections are over. Every patriotic American will accept the results without rancor. It It is the cardinal principal of democracy that the people rule—even as it is the cardinal principle of dictatorship that the people be ruthlessly submerged to the whim of the dictator.

To the thinking citizen, who is less interested in partisan politics than in good government, the real significance of this election is the revival of the two-party system, the very foundation of the republic. It is a well known fact that even men high in the Democratic party have looked with disapproval on that party's excessively great Congressional majorities of recent years. And it will be remembered that following the World War, the Republicans had a similar top heavy majority, faced no influential opposition, and certain abuses were the result.

This election has to a large extent readjusted balance of power in Congress to the status envisioned by the founding fathers. That makes for sound government. Whatever party you follow, whatever your political allegiance, if you believe in democracy, you will welcome the resurgence of an effective political oppositon as a check on whatever party happens to control Congress at the moment.

Good Time For Shopping

Is this too early to think of buying Christmas presents and winter stuff? The business men, who have had long experience in this problem, will say no. Many sensible folks are doing it.

If half the people would do most of their Christmas and winter shopping in the next week some bad trade problems would be solved. The rushing crush to buy gifts and send them away, which creates turmoil in retail trade and in the postal service, would be distributed over a wide period. Many people would be saved from excessive toil and over-strained nerves.

It is commonly said that the reason people engage in a grand rush of buying for about two weeks before Christmas, is that they have no money ahead, and have to wait until a few days before the holiday before they can collect the cash they need. There no doubt are a good many of whom that is true.

Yet the great majority could probably collect the money for gifts just as well now as they can two weeks before Christmas If some change should be made by which Christmas would be observed November 25 instead of on that date in December, they would somehow manage to dig up the money to make their purchases in November, and would not probably find it any harder than it is now to make them in December. If they could do it if Christmas date was changed, they can do itnow,for other reasons.

If they do this shopping now, they get the chance to look over the stock before oher people have picked it over, and selected the most attractive things They will have the satisfaction of shopping at a time when there are not so many customers in the stores, and salespeople can give them more attention. There are many reasons for starting Christmas buying now in this county.

The World's Cruelty

It has been said for many years, that the world has grown kinder hearted, that the old savageries and brutalities of former centuries have passed away and will not return. Reading of the barbarous ways in which the Indians of colonial times used to torture their prisoners, people have shuddered with horror, and said that such things could not occur in modern life.

In many ways kindness has increased. The people of civilized countries are more sensitive to suffering. They established hospitals to cure pain, and those in distress are relieved in many ways.

For the past few years, we have seen a great revival of cruelty Nations at war send their great airplanes over populous cities, and drop their deadly bombs, inflicting cruel wounds and death on helpless and unoffending people, including women and children and old men. Mercy for such ones is forgotten, at least by the armies of some nations.

The cruel persecution of the Jews in Germany is another instance of the revival of savage instincts. Honest and worthy people who have rendered great services to their country are so oppressed that there seems nothing for them to do but to get out of the country. If they go they may have to give up most of their property to get out.

What is the cause of all this savage cruelty? Like so many other things, it can perhaps be charged up to the WorldWar. People got so used to death and suffering on a vast scale, that it hardened the hearts of many. The world sorely needs a revival of kindness, if it is not to sink back into the barbarism of the Dark Ages.

Arming Fascism

Dad, why does President Roosevelt want 12,000 fighting planes in the next two years?

Why, Son, have you been asleep? Haven't you heard about Munich? Don't you know America must defend the Western Hemisphere from Fascism?

Do you believe Germany or Italy is going to attack South America, Dad?

Well, no, not directly. But we can't be sure and we have to beprepared. Germany is said to have the strongest air force in Europe. And since Munich we are not sure just how much Britain can help."

But why do Britain and America help arm the Fascist countries? I saw somewhere the other day that in 1936 and 1937 the United States sent $1,600,000 worth of war materials to Germany, most of it airplane engines. How many planes has Germany?"

There have been all kinds of estimates; General Goering was reported the other day to have said 3,600.

Why should America furnish engines for several hundreds of them and the license under which the motors for some of their best types were made?

Well, Son, you must remember the National Munitions Control Board can't stop American companies shipping supplies to any country unless it is officially at war under the Neutrality Act.

But, Dad, that seems a funny way to defend South America. If new American planes are to match the Fascist air forces, why give Germany American wings? I know I'm only a kid and don't understand diplomacy, but I'd do something about that.

A Revolution

In the excitement of looking over the 1939 automobiles at the recent National Automobile Show in New York, few spectators realized they were actually taking part in a revolution.

And what a revolution—bloodless and life-saving. A vote was being taken on questions pertaining to automobile operation and regulation from the standpoint of safety.

One of the questions was: Which one of the following has been the most effective in making you think seriously about automobile accidents? 1. Personal enforcement experiences; 2. Personal accident experiences; 3. Safety educational experiences. At a time when a total of 3,920 votes had been cast, No. 1 stood 649, No. 2 944 and No. 3, 1704.

And there is your revolution namely, public understanding which resulted from consistent and regular safety education to show that only by personal cooperation between drivers and law enforcement authorities can automobile deaths and accidents be curbed or reduced. During the past year or two the steadyupward trend was broken.

Home Opportunities

We all want to see our home town go ahead and make progress, but are we all doing what we could to accomplish that result? People may ask what they can do. They may say they can't give big sums of money and establish needed institutions. Nor can they go out and induce some new industry to move in and provide more jobs.

There is one thing they can do which will help a great deal, and that is to spend their money at home. That builds up home town business, and when home town business improves, it can employ more people, and it can supply more complete stocks of goods. Also it is able to pay more taxes, which makes it possible for the town to keep adding improvements. Back up the home stores, if you want to see the home town go ahead.

Reassessment Postponed Three Times, Scheduled For 1939

The first general reassessment of real property in sixteen counties of Maryland in twelve years will be undertaken next year, it is revealed

Machinery for handling valuation of real and personal property, tangible and intangible, has been set in motion by the State Tax Commission.

Upon the Commission devolves the task of notifying the sixteen boards of county commissioners of the need for including in their levies sufficient appropriations to cover the estimated cost of the reassessment.

Accordingly boards in Baltimore and Harford counties have been notified. The fiscal year in those counties coincides with the calendar year.

Seven counties began a general reassessment last year. Six completed it and hence the job will not have to be undertaken again in these counties for another five years.

In Allegany county, a reassessment started last year is still in progress. Some revalued properties have been put on the assessment books. The others will be added during the coming year.

Because Baltimore city has a permanent staff of assessors and a comprehensive system of revaluing and assessing property that functions regularly from year to year, the plan does not affect the municipality.

Neither does it affect Frederick county, which in lieu of making a general reassessment put into effect a plan similar to that in effect in Baltimore.

A board of assessors of three members is now making a systematic review of all realty in Frederick county and will continue to function as a permanent body

The six counties that have completed general reassessment were exempted, along with Allegany, Frederick and Harford, from the provisions of an act passed by the 1937 Legislature postponing a general reassessment scheduled for all counties of the State in 1937.

They are: Garrett, Anne Arundel St. Mary's, Kent Caroline, and Worcester.

The last general reassessment of all twenty-three counties took place in 1927. State law requires a general reassessment every five years.

Because of the depression in 1931 the Legislature of that year postponed the reassessment due in 1932 until 1935. The 1936 Legislature postponed it now on the books known to until 1937, and the Legislature which met then postponed it until 1939.

The cost of the task will vary from $7,500 to $85,000, depending upon the size of the county, according to Michael J. Lindsay chief supervisor of assessments for the State Tax Commission.

The number of assessors per county will run from eight for the smaller ones to perhaps fifty for the larger, thickly settled counties.

Prior to the actual field work of the assessors, a vast amount of office work must be completed. The assessment books must be copied onto cards, which the assessors take into the field and use in arriving at the valuation of the properties.

Assessors not only will value property already on the books, but will watch for so-called missed properties, those that never were assessed because of failure of owners to take out building permits for new structures or some similar reason.

Regarding tangible and intangible properties, notices will be forwarded to each taxpayer possess taxable personal property.

Moreover, additional names will be obtained by checking State income tax returns, tenant farmers, those who have secured State licenses and those aquatic - minded Marylanders whose watercraft are registered at the United States Custom House.

In the case of personal property the owner is responsible for making an accurate return.

Reports of the field assessors are reviewed by the chief supervisor in each of the counties. These men are appointed by the State Tax Commission from a slate of candidates suggested by the boards of county commissioners.

The supervisors forward their reports to the commissioners. Notices then are sent to property owners advising them of the new evaluations.

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Schedule in effect May 27, 1938 (Eastern Standard Time)

LEAVE LOVE POINT (B. & E. R. R. PIER)
DAILY ex. Sun. 1:00 a. m. — DAILY 9:35 a. m. — DAILY 6:00 p. m.

LEAVE BALTIMORE (PIER 5, LIGHT STREET)
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Effective September 20, 1938

DAILY AND SUNDAY
Eastern Standard Time

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Leave Annapolis	Leave Matapeake
7:25 a.m.	7:25 a.m.
*8:00 a.m.	8:00 a.m.
9:00 a.m.	9:00 a.m.
10:00 a.m.	10:00 a.m.
11:00 a.m.	*-11:00 a.m.
12:00 Noon	12:00 Noon
1:00 p.m.	1:00 p.m.
x2:00 p.m.	2:00 p.m.
3:00 p.m.	x-3:00 p.m.
4:00 p.m.	4:00 p.m.
*5:00 p.m.	5:00 p.m
6:00 p.m.	6:00 p.m.
7:00 p.m.	7:00 p.m.
8:00 p.m.	*-8:00 p.m.

*-Denotes bus connections via Matapeake, Romancoke and Claiborne.

x-Denotes bus connections via Matapeake only.

BETWEEN ROMANCOKE AND CLAIBORNE

Leave Romancoke	Leave Claiborne
**9:00 a.m.	8:00 a.m.
11:00 a.m.	**10:00 a.m.
2:00 p.m.	1:00 p.m.
4:00 p.m.	3:00 p.m.
**6:00 p.m.	5:00 p.m.
8:00 p.m.	**7:00 p.m.

Note: ** - Denotes pedestrians will be transported by motor coach between Matapeake and Romancoke and Romancoke and Matapeake on these trips only.

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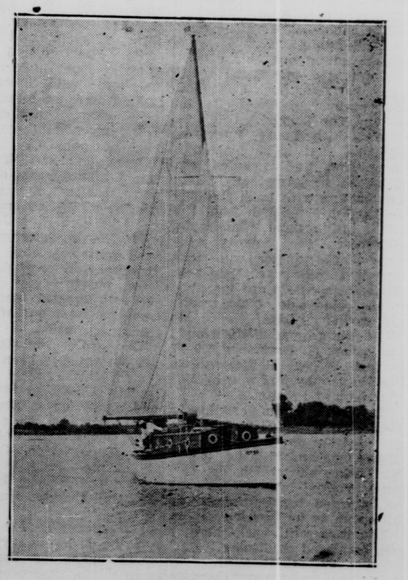

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