

News Report From Washington

Business Windfall?
Stock Prices—
The Worst Kept Secret—
A Big Four Parley?

Washington — Business officials continue to brighten their forecasts for the year 1955, and there is generally an upsurge of optimism in the business world today, even surpassing that of November and December. The most accepted version of prospects is that they are good for a period lasting well into 1955.

Although every earlier estimate for 1955 cautioned the public that this year would not be a boom year, or even a spectacular one forecasts currently being made agree that sales records should set an all-time high and that profits also be at a high.

Construction is expected to continue at a fast clip while consumer buying expands. By raises coming for the military services, for government civil service workers and for postal workers will all have an effect on buying power. In addition, labor is expected to win pay raises in a number of fields.

With unemployment not expected to rise above 1954 levels, and with inventories in many fields lower than last year this time, the expectation is for a larger volume of manufacturers' orders. So far this year this has been true in the automotive trade.

This rosy business picture is one reason the stock market has steadily advanced in recent months. The advance has continued until it surprised even seasoned experts. It has advanced until some stocks are costing quite a lot in proportion to the dividends they pay.

Yet the market continues to rise. As long as business is good, and it will probably be good for a couple of years or eighteen months, at least, these stocks may stay up at the high levels, but sooner or later some of them will probably settle down to more normal prices.

If the readjustment comes suddenly, there could be a rapid level-off in market prices and much profit-taking. In all the bright business forecasts, this one word of caution seems to be lacking. Just because business appears headed for a good cycle that does not al-

ways mean it is the time to buy stocks. The present, a time when stocks have been rising for years, and when buying has forced some issues to surprising levels, could or could not be a good time to invest in stocks, despite the prospect of a very good business year and the improbability of any serious depression.

The worst-kept secret in Washington at about this time is usually some executive committee testimony, with Capitol Hill cranking up again. But the worst-kept secret right now is the little budget-balancing drama that is surging back and forth between several high Administration officials.

The idea of at least one key man was to paint a black picture to the 84th Congress in the field of balanced budgets. Then, after the Democrats had raised a sizeable crop of cane, the Administration would up and produce a balanced budget.

And the year would be—of course—AD 1956 — the year, by chance, of the presidential election. That would put the voters in the right frame of mind for voting the right way, according to this theory, which is getting a pretty good play in Washington at present.

The only trouble with this plan is the mere existence of a Democratic Congress. The Democrats might just spend enough money in the next two years to keep the budget unbalanced. Of course, President Eisenhower could use his veto, but on many bills he would think twice before sending them back, for he could get something worse and he could also receive credit for killing them—if they did not return to the White House.

While the French are more eager than ever to arrange a Big Four meeting in Paris, the British and American government have grown rather cool to the idea in the last six weeks.

Premier Mendes-France would like to have the Big Four meeting in Paris in May. But Mr. Eisenhower has his doubts whether the French are really a big fourth, and also whether they can deal realistically with the Reds. The British are likewise concerned about the possibility that the French will favor a deal with Russia.

The question is asked what the Allies have to gain from the Reds, now that West Germany is apparently headed for rearmament.

Soldiers' Favorite Drink Is Revealed

SEOUL—The soldier's favorite drink, Hollywood notwithstanding, is water.

Statistics show that the U. S. Army's 24th Infantry Division men use more than 3,000,000 (M) gallons of purified water each month.

There is plenty of water in the area where the Taro Leaf division is located, but the troops won't touch a drop of it until the Third Engineer Combat Battalion has purified it. Battalion water points supply more than 100 tank trucks daily from 7 A. M. until 8 P. M.

Water usually is taken from deep wells rather than from running streams which are likely to be polluted. It is pumped through sets of filters consisting of metal tubes coated with silicon powder which eliminates up to 90 per cent of the bacteria.

Civil Service Jobs Available

A Civil Service Examination for the positions of Helper, Aircraft Electrician; Helper, Aircraft Mechanic General; Helper, Metalsmith Aviation; Helper, Radio Mechanic; \$9.28 to \$10.08 per diem; Electrician (Aircraft); \$14.24 to \$15.36 per diem; Aircraft Instrument Mechanic; \$14.24 to \$15.36 per diem; Auto Mechanic (Body and Fender); \$13.44 to \$14.56 per diem; Painter (Brush) and "Painter (Spray)"; \$13.04 to \$14.16 per diem; Radio Mechanic; \$14.24 to \$15.36 per diem; (Males Only), for indefinite appointment at the U. S. Naval Air Facility, Weeksville, Elizabeth City, N. C., and Aircraft Repair Supply Base, U. S. Coast Guard, Elizabeth City, N. C., is now open, it was stated today by Edgar Fields, Civil Service Information Representative at the local post office.

The examination is being held by the Board of U. S. Civil Service Examiners, Fifth Naval District, and applications will be accepted by the Executive Secretary, Board of U. S. Civil Service Examiners, Fifth Naval District, U. S. Naval Base, Norfolk 11, Virginia, until the needs of the service have been met.

No written test is required for this examination. Applicants will be rated on the basis of their experience and training as described in their applications.

Complete information and application forms may be obtained from Mr. Fields, Civil Service Information Representative at the local post office.

Music is well said to be the speech of angels. —Thos. Carlyle.

True delicacy, as true generosity, is more wounded by an act of offence from itself, than to itself. —Lord Greville.

Big Whale Shoot Gives U. S. Soldiers Chance To Brush Up On Marksmanship

KEFLAVIK, Iceland—The United States Army has come to the aid of the North Atlantic herring. Sharpshooting Army infantrymen are being called upon to level their deadly M-1 rifles in defense of these watery inhabitants off the western coast of Iceland.

At the invitation of the Icelandic government, 60 armed soldiers boarded small fishing vessels to shoot killer whales that had been playing havoc with the herring catch of local fishermen. Icelanders claim the whales destroy themselves by attacking each other after the bullets wound them.

one to four tons in weight, and 15 to 30 feet in length. Recently large schools of these whales tore through fishing nets to get at the herring catch. Needless to say, this was not appreciated by the fishermen.

The killer whales average from

cold weather. In any event, local fishermen claim straight shooting infantrymen accounted for more than 100 whales in a single mission.

The pig that is being slaughtered as I write this line will leave the world better than it found it. —George Moore.

The march of the human mind is slow. —Edmund Burke.

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Public Sale

I will offer for sale at public auction, for cash, at the home of the late C. F. Reed, two miles west of Hertford, on January 22, 1955, at 10 o'clock A. M., all my household and kitchen furniture and numerous other chattels.

Mrs. C. F. Reed

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NEW MAGIC CHEF GAS RANGE	\$137.50
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NEW CALORIC AUTOMATIC GAS RANGE	\$169.95
Was \$219.95. NOW	
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Was \$199.95. NOW	
USED ELECTRIC RANGE	\$47.50
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USED UNIVERSAL GAS RANGE	\$49.00
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