

Sidelights

2 Million to Seek Jobs This Year

The key problem of the months ahead will be "persistent unemployment above normal levels, rather than inflation," according to Dr. Jules Backman, Professor of Economics at New York University.

In a talk to a textile buying clinic in the Statler Hotel yesterday, he predicted that while business activity would reach record levels this year, employment opportunities would continue to lag. The young people entering the labor force this year and the rise in productivity indicate the need to find jobs for 2,000,000 to 2,500,000 additional persons, he said.

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Tree Farms Increase

Growing trees for profit continues to be an expanding business, according to American Forest Products Industries, Inc., sponsor of the national tree farm program.

The trade organization reported yesterday that there were 2,998 tree-farm units added last year, a record rise for the eighteen-year-old program.

There were 13,935 tree farms enrolled in the program at the close of 1958, compared with 10,937 a year earlier. The amount of timberland rose to 48,320,451 acres, a gain of 7½ per cent from that of 1957.

Florida led in tree-farm acreage with 4,665,009 acres. Following close behind were Georgia, Alabama and Oregon. Mississippi had the most tree farms with 1,445 units. It was followed by Alabama and Texas.

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Oil-Drenched Sand

For years Canadian oil men have been contemplating the Athabaska area northeast of Edmonton, Alberta, with a speculative eye. The oil there was locked in the sands and the problem had been to squeeze it out at an economical cost.

Yesterday, from Calgary, the Canadian Press reported that Lloyd R. Champion, a Montreal financier, had entered the competitive race to develop the area, with the claim that he had a hot-water method of releasing the oil from the sand. He believes that a ton of sand will yield a barrel of oil and that the sands can yield 300,000,000 barrels of oil. His plans included construction later this year of an \$80,000,000 separation plant by a company recently formed, called Oil Sands, Ltd.

Last year the Richfield Oil Corporation announced a plan to tap the sands by atomic explosion, but has yet to release full details. There also have been other efforts to remove the oil.

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Measuring Stockpiles

How much coal (or sand or gravel or ore) does a mountain of it contain? The answer usually varies from one guesser to another. Now something has been done to make estimates more accurate by application of an electronic computer to aerial photography.

The system has been developed over the last few years by Lockwood, Kessler & Bartlett, Inc., consulting engineering concern of Syosset, L. I. Ford Bartlett, president, said that the heightened speed and accuracy of the system had led to many new applications.

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Mighty Midget

Looking like a small pepper mill, an eight-ounce calculator imported from one of the world's smallest countries is working for American Government and industry. Made by the Contina Company, the Principality of Lichtenstein, the calculator is called the Curta and is imported by the Curta Company of Chicago. It can fit easily into the palm of a man's hand.

The company said the computer was being used by Government engineers to help in road and bridge building where quick on-the-job calculations were needed, as well as by business men in offices.

Besides adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing, the calculator figures square roots.

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Philatelists All

The shareholders in Pacific Northern Airlines, Inc., are about to become philatelists. The carrier has mailed them from Juneau, Alaska, a "first day cover" consisting of an envelope bearing the Alaska Statehood Stamp.

Calling itself "Partner in the progress of Alaska," the company pointed out in the accompanying letter it had been operating in the new state for twenty-seven years and ranked as the largest carrier of Alaskan air traffic.

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Miscellany

The New York Telephone Company plans to spend \$255,000,000 this year on expansion and replacements, compared with \$250,000,000 last year.

Sales of electronic control equipment for missiles and aircraft totaled \$2,300,000,000 last year, according to Stephen F. Keating, vice president of the Minneapolis-Honeywell Regulator Company. This was a gain of \$400,000,000 from the level in 1957. He predicted sales of \$3,000,000,000 for 1959.

Northrop Aircraft, Inc., plans to change its name on Feb. 2 to Northrop Corporation.

In line with its corporate simplification program, the Columbia Gas System said yesterday that the Ohio Valley Gas Company, a subsidiary, had begun operating the retail gas business in Ohio. This business was formerly owned by the Manufacturers Light and Heat Company of Pittsburgh, another subsidiary.