The Queenstown News

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Day of Reckoning

To anyone who doubts that it's time for America to cut out the feather-bedding the yammering about "social gains", the making and unmaking of control regulations and the pampering of industry, of labor and of youth that must always provide that defense wall of flesh and blood, two stories this week's front page should be shockers.

Allied officers report that expert Russian artillerymen are directing Red gunfire on Korea's western front, and have been since the first of November. Chairman Harold R. Boyer of the Defense Production Administration announced drastic cutbacks in military aircraft production schedules. Instead of the five-fold increase that President Truman forecast last December for 1951, the years end will see warplane production no more than doubled. This is a sickening confirmation of General Hoyt S. Vandenberg's report earlier in the month that our planes in Korea are absolete and in sufficient, and that industry is providing only a "trickle" of new planes.

Of all the reasons assigned for our production failure, the most significant, and the most difficult to correct is our tragic shortage of engineers. Today's planes are so much more complex than even those of World War II that today on eaircraft worker out of eight must be an engineer, compared with one out of 22 in 1943. In those days, only one worker in 1,000 was an electronics mecnanic. Today we require one of these hard-to-train spcialists for every 24 workers.

This is the crisis foreseen by the Thomas A. Edison Foundation, which, for the past year has been working under the direction of Vice Admiral Harold A. Bowen, to rally educators, scientists and industrialists to the need for a unified and intensive effort to recruit tens of thousands of schoolboys and college men to fill the gaping ranks of engineering. Admiral Bowen did not overstate the case when he told the Foundation's conference on scientific manpower only two weeks ago that this shortage threatens the survival of America.

There is cause for rejoicing in the Kremlin. There is very little in Washington.

Average Farm Now Biggest In History . . With Less Help

The American Farm is 35½ acres larger than it was in 1940, has a half a horse less, a quarter of a tractor more, about the same number of residents in the cowbarn and half a chicken more, according to the Bureau of the Census.

Compared with 1940, there are 713,000 less farms, but the total acreage remains about the same. Nearly a million and a half more farms were electrified and 221,000 more installed telephones from 1945 to 1950.

We don't know whether the hired man lit out for the city or whether he got fired, but during the decade 870,000 workers quit the soil. This is probably the most significant statistic in the farm census. Whether we like it or not, the day of mechanical help and power farming is here. Fortunately, most Americans like it.

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