

Economists predict manufacturing employment decline

Manufacturing employment in Michigan will decline in 1979 and early 1980, University of Michigan economists predict. That is largely because the slowdown expected in the national economy is concentrated in the automotive and business fixed investment sectors.

The turnaround in manufacturing employment is expected to begin in mid-1980 following an upswing in car sales expected in late 1979. (New car sales are expected to fall to an annual rate of 10.5 million units in the fall of 1979 and then recover during 1980 model year.)

Professors Saul H. Hyman and Harold T. Shapiro, with researcher Joan M. Porter, made a recent evaluation of the state economy in an update of the Michigan forecast issued last fall at the university's annual Conference on the Economic Outlook.

The revised "Control Forecast" for Michigan assumes major components of the national outlook which are relevant to the state forecast. Those are: a rate of growth of real gross national product (GNP) under 1 percent through 1979; a decline in residential construction; some weakness in auto sales before recovery during the 1980 model year; progressive weakening in busi-

ness capital spending after mid-1979; increasing rate of inflation through 1979; steadily rising national unemployment rate which exceeds 6.6 percent in the closing quarter of 1979 and peaks at just over seven percent in late 1980.

"SINCE THE slowdown in the national economy is concentrated in the auto and business fixed investment sectors," the U-M economists explain, "it is expected that there will be a disproportionate effect on the Michigan economy with its concentration in durable goods manufacturing.

"Manufacturing employment is expected to decline by 2.7 percent for 1979 and another 2.4 percent for 1980. The turnaround in manufacturing employment begins in mid-1980 following the upswing in car sales which is expected in late 1979.

"This increase in manufacturing employment contrasts sharply with the decline forecast to occur through mid-1980, but is of modest proportions since business capital spending continues to decline through 1980. The only other sector of the state economy which shows a drop in employment over the forecast period is contract construction which declines throughout the forecast

period due to the drop in both residential and non-residential building activity.

"Total employment increases a modest 0.7 percent and 0.4 percent for 1979 and 1980, respectively. Given our projection of labor force growth, these increases imply unemployment rates of 8 percent for 1979 and 8.8 percent for 1980.

"While these rates are higher than their national counterparts, indicating a more sluggish economy in Michigan than for the nation as a whole, they are much lower than the 12 and a half percent unemployment rate which Michigan averaged during the severe recession year of 1975."

personal income of only 9.7 percent in 1979. The corresponding national figures are 11.7 percent in 1978 and 11.4 percent in 1979. Thus, for the second year in a row, personal income growth in Michigan is expected to fall behind the growth in U.S. personal income."

Gross personal income tax revenues in Michigan are forecast to increase by \$183 million and \$260 million for fiscal years 1979 and 1980 respectively, as compared with \$237 million for fiscal year 1978.

The economists point out that a continuation of restrictive federal monetary policy probably would further depress the state economy.

"Perhaps the most negative aspect, for the state, of a long continuation of restrictive monetary policy is that it would hit hardest at just those sectors of the economy — autos, construction, and business investment — which are critically important in producing a turnaround in the Michigan economy after the spring of 1980," they conclude.

She changes the catering business

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Now that Mrs. Johnson doesn't drive as much, she depends on others to drive her trucks for her.

"I only hire girls to drive my catering trucks. Men at first were so upset I was bringing girls into the business. But girls keep the trucks 10 times cleaner. They're quicker to wait on the men. And if someone asks them to put mustard and ketchup on a sandwich, they'll do it. A man will tell them to do it themselves," Mrs. Johnson said.

CLEANLINESS is important to the truck catering business.

"Our food trucks are open to inspection by the health department at any

time. If a truck doesn't pass inspection, the inspector puts a small piece of tape across a door. You can't break that tape. That piece of tape can close down your whole business," said Mrs. Johnson.

She trains her drivers for one month. If they aren't clean enough by her standards, they don't work for her. She never allows any piece of food from one shift to be sold on another shift.

Mrs. Johnson has noticed a change over the years in what people like to eat. She stocks popular sellers — sloppy joes, foot-long hot dogs, cheeseburgers, ground hamburger with spices, pizza dogs, pastries and kielbasa.

But she also sells fresh fruit and salads in the summer and yogurt. Fruits and salads can't be stocked in the winter because they freeze.

The food boxes Mrs. Johnson buys for her Chevrolet trucks are made in Chicago.

The stainless steel boxes keep food hot by means of hot air and food cold with bins of ice.

Doors lift easily and quickly on three sides, displaying everything for sale.

"THESE ARE THE most modern boxes made," she said. "They are much faster than the trucks people walked through for food."

The truck catering business has been good to Mrs. Johnson. She has supported her four children and they built her family seven-gable house in Oakland Township.

One of her sons, John, 23, left his job as a car starter to join Pat's Catering. He's entering a truck route in Lapeer where, according to Mrs. Johnson, people aren't familiar with a catering truck.

For those interested in starting their own food catering truck business, Mrs. Johnson's words of advice are "to have lots of money."

"A truck costs \$19,000. You need heavy insurance and have to be bonded in a lot of areas. It takes time before money comes in," she said.

"I love catering. I think it's the greatest business on earth. You meet people who are hungry and who appreciate your being there."

"But there's got to be something a little easier to do to make a living," she said. "I'd tell people to get into a business that doesn't start so early in the morning."

Graduation at Beth El

The Mid-Week Hebrew School of Temple Beth El, Bloomfield Township, will be graduated at the 8:30 p.m. worship services Friday, May 25.

Alfred L. Lindenbaum, interim director of the temple's Religious School, and Virginia Heller, faculty member, will be honored. Lindenbaum will present awards to the students.

Rabbi Daniel I. Schwartz will speak on "The In Crowd."

Jay Leslie Kreindler's Bar Mitzvah will be observed. An Oneg Shabbat will be held in Handelman Hall following the services.

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