Blanchard tries to 'educate' auto suppliers

Auto suppliers — the hundreds of small firms which make parts for the Big Four auto mnunfacturers — are in deep trouble and want state belp.

We'll do anything we can do, either by getting out of the way or helping's said Gov. James J. Blanchard this week as he unveiled a long list of efforts the state will make.

A report entitled "Auto Supplier Target Industry Development Programsold suppliers should be a priority industry once the Michigan Strategic Fund is in operation. Auto suppliers will be high on the list to receive help from federal-state job retraining funds. And they will be helped by an array of educational resources — the fledging Industrial Technology Institute in Ann Arbor, state universities and particularly community college Justitute in Ann Arbor, state universities and particularly community college Justitute in Ann Arbor, state universities and particularly community college Institute in Ann Roger B. Smith of Bloomilieli Hills, for its 35 pages of recommendations.

ALAN WEBBER, a Harvard University business school professor hired to review the new report, said in an intervent the auto industry provides a case study" in how other nations are case study in how other nations are case in the case of the case of

between those three economic sectors.

The level of competition in the industry has increased dramatically, and Webber. Auto suppliers see their numbers shrinking, with remaining firms being asked to take greater responsibility for innovation and new product development, as well as for improving product quality and productivity.

tivity."
Webber said his six weeks of interviews with suppliers showed they believe "the cost of doing business in Michigan is too high and must be reduced," particularly unemployment and workers compensation costs.

and workers compensation costs.

"MANY SUPPLIERS said they needde information and training about new
technologies, new production techname and new approaches to
managing people to help them become
more productive. "Webber said.

"Most suppliers said they would welcome financial aid to help defray the
costs of learning new methods," as well
as help in developing new markets, he
reported.

Of the 2,500 suppliers of parts, components and materials, 80 percent are
small – fewer than 100 employees, he
said.

O'Brien named new chief judge

Francis X. O'Brien has been elected chief judge of the Circuit Court in Oakland County. As chief judge, O'Brien will be responsible for the administration of the court during his two-year

o'Brien first served in the county as

O'Brien first served in the county as chief depuly county clerk-register of deeds from 1985-69. He practiced law from 1986-19 and the from 1986 to 1972. After four years as a district judge in Royal Oak, he was elevated to the circuit bench.
O'Brien teaches in the legal assistant program at Oakland University. In addition, he serves as an adjunct professor in Cooley Law School's Advocacy Program.
Judge O'Brien studied law through the National Jodicial College and the American Academy of Judicial Education at Stanford, Harvard, University of Newada, and the Michigan Judicial Institute.



Francis X. O'Brien



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nology institute (TT) in Ann Arbor, and Blanchard promised it support. Jerome Snith, directop of TTI for the past four months, asid it is "positioned between academia and industrial ex-perimentation. We are hastening the process of putting research results into implementation.

implementation. "We are a private, 'nonprofit, research and development organization in the area of industrial automation,' said Smith, a former professor of fluid mechanics at Princeton University and holder of three degrees in aeronautical engineerings."

engineering.
"We have 30 employees now and ex-

pect to grow to 250 in three years," be said. Funding has come from the sit at state and the Dow and Kellogg foundations.
What will TII do? Smith gave three to appliers was a restatuement of almost consulting services to auto suppliers where we can learn as well as perform a service.

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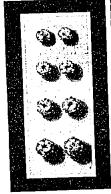
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