



**ANOTHER "BETTER IDEA"** — Ralph Thompson, a Ford Motor Company packaging engineer, in the Plymouth Township plant, shows his idea that won first place at the Society of Packaging and Handling Engineers annual conference. He suggested packing air conditioner parts vertically, using polystyrene dividers, instead of horizontally with corrugated cardboard dividers. This new packaging method allows 33 per cent more parts per carton. He received a \$50 U. S. Savings Bond and a desk set from the society. Thompson works at Ford's Sheldon Road Heater and Conditioner Plant, one of eight plants operated by the company's General Parts Division.

## We Won't Run Out Of Things To Buy

Our affluent society is "adaptive" and won't necessarily become a saturated society in which people run out of things they wish to buy, a University of Michigan economist maintains.

Prof. George Katona, director of national consumer attitude surveys for the University of Michigan Survey Research Center, spoke last week at the American Economic Association meeting.

He said critics are wrong in predicting that prosperity must be its own gravest danger because saturation will lead to collapse of the consumer economy. Katona, author of such books as "The Powerful Consumer" and "The Mass Consumption Society," noted that most American families have income sufficient to cover more than basic needs, and said this makes it essential that the study of consumer psychology become a part of economic analysis.

AN "ADAPTIVE" THEORY of consumer behavior, he explained, considers changes in tastes, attitudes, and expectations. Wants are not static; levels of aspiration are raised with success and lowered with failure, he said.

Consumers' discretionary expenditures depend upon both (1) ability to buy and (2) willingness to buy, Katona emphasized. In tests, families were divided by income trends.

Those with income gains and expected income increases, and especially those who say they are better off than in the past and expect to be better off in the future, are shown to have been the largest purchasers of durable goods, especially on the installment plan.

The economist added that optimistic expectations depend not only on age and income, but also on the extent of past progress.

THIS CONCLUSION is contrasted with the analysis by John Kenneth Galbraith in his 1957 book, "The New Industrial State," according to which affluence makes management or control of consumers by large industry possible. The thesis of Galbraith that the consumer is or can be controlled by mature corporations, because consumer wants are contrived by the producers, appears to conflict with actual findings, Katona said.

The process of such influence, Katona insisted, is not one-directional. Consumers, he said, exert an influence on the producers of goods as well as on economic trends.

"No doubt the consumer's choice is restricted by what is offered to him, and the two-way flow of the learning process involves some 'management' But restricted choice is not equivalent to absence of choice. The consumer's margin of choice is yet sufficient to influence the economy greatly."

## Silver Needs Special Care

Whether the collection is large or small, today's young homemaker likes to keep her cherished silver out where it can be admired and used often.

To keep display silver bright for months at a time with minimum effort, Mrs. Mary Gaffney, director of the Hagerty Home Care Institute, South Bend Ind., suggests this easy plan:

Coat each piece with Silver-Smith's Polish, a new formula that contains a most effective tarnish-preventing ingredient.

Leave polish on for a minute. Then buff with a clean, soft cloth or, if you wish, rinse and dry. Either way, an invisible barrier remains to protect against airborne elements that cause tarnishing.

Appliance Buyers, Ollie Frætter Says, "Don't Miss This Sale"

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