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Slow Spending Customers Stir up Business Alarms

By REYNOLDS KNIGHT
Now that the business pendulum has been judged to be definitely on the upswing, business managements and economists are starting to keep especially close tabs on one vitally important indicator: consumer spending.

The economic history of our country since the 1950s began showed the readiness and ability of consumers to buy is a powerful force in spurring booms and in alleviating the impact of recessions. Hence any sign that consumer psychology is switching to a "hold back" frame of mind causes alarm. Just by itself such psychology can dampen large segments of the economy.

Typical of the statistics that start worry is a recent report on department store sales trends. It showed volume in the four weeks through the first week of May down one per cent from the like 1962 period, while in May's first week the decline was three per cent—hinting that the downslip could be gathering speed.

Actually, department store sales represent only one measurement of consumer feeling. And skilled observers don't tend to become Cassandras because of one or two such "defeats." Currently they'll quickly note that auto sales have remained on a boom-type plateau, for example, and that with high employment and production rates prevailing nationally, it would take more than one cloud to dim the economic sunshine.

"BRAINS" AID BUILDERS
—Electronic computers soon will be designing entire cities and towns, a building industry leader predicts.

They will produce layouts for grading land and locating streets, parks, shopping centers, building lots and public utility networks. These "brains" will do this job for large as well as smaller communities, "in record time and at great savings in cost," says William J. Levitt, president of Levitt and Sons, Inc., the world's largest builder of residential communities.

"These are not blue sky predictions, nor is their realization far off," Mr. Levitt emphasizes, adding that use of the computer in a variety of applications already is reducing costs and speeding up his own firm's projects.

ACCORDING TO Levitt, computers will help determine when and where to build new communities, how large they should be, the most desirable types of houses to build and the price range of homes in greatest demand.

The electronic marvels will be able to obtain information by scanning special aerial photographs, Mr. Levitt says, as well as absorbing programmed engineering and community planning data.

After "memorizing" the topography (the contours of the land), they will compute the optimum community layout by processing information about the site in relation to the designers' ideas and specifications.

VACATION VILLAINS — In many states the business of attracting vacationers from other states is one of the top five means of producing income. But while individual investments in vacations add up to billions of dollars a year, the only financial reports of concern to individual vacationers are their own. The sign of success is the classic postcard no-

tation: "Having wonderful time."

Two common vacation villains frequently ignored in travel planning, which can prevent such a happy report, are (1) bad weather, and (2) insects. Families planning to invest substantial sums in travel, meals and lodging can reduce the odds by having the first travel agent about such things as rainfall and temperature averages. They can also inquire about indoor facilities and attractions for cold or rainy days.

EVEN IF the weather at a resort is ideal, an onslaught of mosquitoes, sand flies and other biting insects can ruin the vacation. Relief is easier to obtain. A few years ago the U. S. Department of Agriculture discovered a chemical called diethyl-toluamide, which repels all common biting insects for several hours. Since then diethyl-toluamide has been adopted by the U. S. Army as its new all-purpose insect repellent. Happily for the outdoors-minded vacationer, the greaseless substance is also available in civilian form under such nationally-available brand names as Off!

THINGS TO COME—The amateur boatman's bugaboo, a stubborn engine that won't start, can be assaulted with a new fuel additive that absorbs moisture and inhibits gum formation in the fuel line. . . . An Ohio firm has introduced in limited areas a wide-mouth jar for its ketchup that lets the homemaker spoon out the last remnant. . . . A new kitchen utensil combines three tools or functions — knife, serving

spoon and draining off excess cooking fluids. It's made of stainless steel.

GIFT-WRAPPED TOYS — At least one manufacturer of toys and playthings has stolen a leaf from the book used by liquor firms: wrapping the products in gift-wrapped coverings before moving them into distribution. Observers are waiting to see whether toy retailers—and the public—will accept the innovation. The toy industry as a whole is frightfully competitive, and chances are that if the experiment suc-

ceeds, the entire industry will jump into the practice overnight.

BITS O' BUSINESS — Pay boosts for industrial workers in the first quarter of this year averaged out to the same general pattern as last year's: West Coast workers did best with an average boost of 8.3 cents an hour, while New England got the smallest collective "raise"—6.1 cents. . . . Supermarket shoppers face a hidden price hike, as major grocery bag makers are raising prices on the containers.

Col. Cumberland or Gilbert 3-6181 for location of your nearest store

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<p>Porterhouse Steaks HE-MAN FAVORITES \$1.09 lb.</p> <p>Boneless Top Sirloin DELUXE STEAKS \$1.29 lb.</p> <p>7-Bone Chuck Roast CENTER CUTS 39¢ lb.</p>	

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VON'S SAVE CASH ON FRESH PRODUCE

WHITE MEATED PEACHES

First of the Spring Season! Sweet, Juicy, Luscious Flavor.

25¢ lb.

<p>Valencia Oranges SWEET & JUICY 4 LB. BAG 39¢</p> <p>Green Beans FRESH AND SNAPPY EARLY GARDEN FLAVOR! 19¢ lb.</p> <p>Fresh Corn SWEET AND TENDER, FROM THE COACHELLA VALLEY. LARGE EAR 5¢</p>	<p>Fruit Cocktail FANCY FARMS 303 CAN 3:49¢</p> <p>Pineapple Juice DOLE HAWAIIAN 46 OZ. CAN 19¢</p> <p>Safflower Oil VON'S—HIGH IN POLY UNSATURATES. 24 OZ. BTL. 39¢</p> <p>Tops 'n Pop CANNED BEVERAGES ASSY FLAVORS—12 OZ. CAN 12:71</p> <p>Niblets Corn GOLDEN, WHOLE KERNEL 12 OZ. CAN 5:71</p>
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VON'S SAVE CASH IN THE DELICATESSEN

ALL MEAT FRANKS

WILSON'S 1 LB. PKG. **49¢**

<p>Sharp Cheddar HERKIMER COUNTY, NEW YORK CAREFULLY AGED OVER 2 YRS. In The Place 79¢</p> <p>Health Salad VON'S OWN... HEALTHFUL, LIGHT AND REFRESHING. 15 OZ. CUP 29¢</p> <p>Gem Flake Rolls BORDEN'S... LIGHT & FLAKY 8 OZ. PKG. 2:49¢</p>	<p>FRENCH FRIES</p> <p>Everfresh—Heat 'n Eat</p> <p>9 OZ. PKG. 10¢</p>	<p>DETERGENT SALVO</p> <p>Pre-Measured Tablets</p> <p>GIANT SIZE INCL. 10¢ OFF</p> <p>59¢</p>
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<p>Scout Camps</p> <p>Open June 22</p> <p>The three Lake Arrowhead Boy Scout camps will open June 22, according to David D. Hurford, chairman of the camping committee of the Los Angeles Area Scout Council. Reservations, \$23 per week, may be made with the camping department of the area council, DU 5-3461.</p>	<p>Bakery Buys!</p> <p>VON'S BAKERY</p> <p>Von's Cherry Pie TASTY WISCONSIN CHEPRIES OPEN TOP—8 INCH SIZE 49¢</p> <p>Bar-B-Que French Bread 31¢</p>	<p>Liquor Features</p> <p>Mountain Ridge BOURBON</p> <p>Straight 86 Proof \$3.59 Save 40¢</p>
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