

# Corporate Earnings Increase 5 Per Cent During First Quarter

Corporation profits, judging by the reports which have been made public so far this month, rose in the first quarter of 1955 to a level five per cent above those of first-quarter 1954. If all corporations do as well as those which have reported, total earnings will be close to \$36.5 billion this year.

The average American is not much inclined to dance for joy whenever he hears that corporations are flourishing. Most of us don't keep in mind that corporations can do well only when everyone else is doing well too. In fact, the corporation's own treasury is served last from the national pie; when corporations show wide year-to-year gains, the rest of us are almost sure to show wide ones.

For example, the gain in the corporations' slice this year figures to be \$1.5 billion. The Council of Economic Advisers has just reported that the whole economy promises to gain \$7 billion. That would mean a gross national product of \$369 billion in 1955.

In the first quarter, construction and consumer buying of durables were the big gainers. The rise came in spite of the fact that government spending was slightly off.

**STREAMLINED LIVING** — Out in Chicago last week the National Packaging Exposition, biggest event of its kind, saw the launching of a campaign to promote the packaging of paste-like foods in fold-up metal tubes.

To get the drive rolling, the Collapsible Tube Manufacturers Council distributed thousands of one-ounce tubes of jelly to thousands of packaging experts who were on hand to make sure they weren't missing any ways to get their products into the consumer's market basket.

Food in metal tubes—fish and meat patties, caviar, cheese spreads, honey, catsup, mustard, mayonnaise, even cream cheese, butter and coffee cream—have long been popular in Europe.

"There definitely is a place in the streamlined American way of living for foods in tubes," said Lester B. Platt, executive secretary of the Council. "In this type of packaging the foods would be ideal for making canapes and hors d'oeuvres, for school and work lunch boxes, and for picnics, hiking and camping."

**THINGS TO COME**—A pre-war aluminum carport, for protecting the cars of visitors to industrial plants' parking lots, will sustain a load of two tons of snow (if the visitor stays that long). Pills that melt, flavoring and carbonating water at the same time, are being tested in California. . . . A transparent plastic box, for buttons, fishing flies, nuts, screws and bolts, or anything, else that one would have to rummage for blindly, is offered by a Wisconsin firm. . . . A terry cloth beach bag in a wrought iron frame will appear on New York beaches this summer. . . . A new glass percolator's mechanism lifts out with the grounds and leaves the container to be used for serving. . . . Home elevators, which once required expensive rewiring to one's home, can now be had to run on house current.

**PROFITABLE PACKING** — Production of vegetables for processing last year returned the nation's farmers nearly \$240 million. This was some \$22.3 million more than the average for the ten years 1943-52.

Among the leading vegetable products canned and frozen in 1954, reports the American Can Company, were corn, tomatoes, asparagus, snap beans, cabbage, and green peas. These and other important vegetable crops that were processed made up a total of 11.6 billion pounds. To grow them required more than 1.6 million acres of land.

In a general breakdown of agricultural income from vegetables in 1954, the can making firm said that Northeastern farmers netted about \$44 million; those of the Midwest \$77 million; the Southeast \$27 million and the West \$88 million. Gains over the 10-year average were registered in every section.

**CONTROL TROUBLE** — Sometimes it must seem to the harassed officials charged with keeping crop surpluses under control that everyone is against them.

Right now it's cotton. Using to the full his acreage-curbing power, Secretary of Agriculture Benson has slashed total acreage so far that the smallest farms have been cut to tiny cotton patches uneconomic to operate even by mule-and-plow methods. So Cotton Belt senators demand a five-acre minimum, which will raise total plantings some millions of acres.

Now nature is taking a hand to further boost the yield. The weather is extremely dry, right

# Accidents, Not Polio, Disease, Greatest Killer of Youngsters

By ROY O. GILBERT, M.D., Los Angeles County Health Officer

During the course of life people everywhere are subjected to much suffering, disability, and expense in connection with illnesses of one sort or another. It might seem reasonable to assume that anything contributory to this lamentable state would be avoided with careful and purposeful intent, but the current magnitude of the accident problem leads to a contrary conclusion. By and large, people have not yet given this source of trouble the serious attention it obviously deserves.

Ironically enough, the environment where the individual generally feels most secure is the worst place of all for accidents. In the United States during 1952, approximately 4,300,000 people were injured and 29,000 killed in home accidents—at least 90 per cent of which were probably avoidable. Unbelievable as it seems, it is actually safer to be out of the house.

**Accidents Lead List** — Accidents are the leading cause of death among children between the ages of one and 14, and as many in this age group are killed as die from the combined mortality of the next six leading causes of death—pneumonia, congenital defects, cancer, tuberculosis, leukemia, and heart disease. And a great many more are killed than die of the dreaded polio.

Adults, who usually protect children from disease by every means at their disposal, are at the time mama boll weevils are coming out in numbers. If all the weevils die from lack of moisture, the fewer acres will produce more cotton than ever.

**Early Years Dangerous** — The most dangerous time in a child's life, however, is the first few years after he starts to walk and is busy exploring the world around him. At this time, he should be given 100 per cent protection against major dangers but skillfully exposed to minor ones so that they may be used as teaching experiences.

Dr. Harry F. Dietrich, attending physician at the Los Angeles Children's Hospital, states that "from the age of three on, education should supplant protection."

This is the time when the child, under supervision, should learn that sharp objects must not be touched, that matches are hot and must be left alone, and that certain substances must not be swallowed. But, at all times, the adult must be ever alert to remove objects or conditions that constitute a real threat to the child's safety.

Safe self-conduct is a form of behavior just like any other and the pattern, according to Dr. Dietrich, is set by the time the child reaches the age of five. It requires plenty of time and

**PRODUCTION GAINS** — Farm production of the U.S. has increased by about one-third in the past 10 years because of improved methods, but the cropland area is about the same.

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**BITS O' BUSINESS**—Housing starts in the first three months of 1955 were a record 295,000. . . . Allowances to dealers, first sign of the customary spring price cuts, are appearing in some markets for light fuel oils. . . . Future prices signal that metal dealers expect government stockpiling of metals to continue past June 30, present cut-off date. . . . The government will spend \$54 million for tools to make ships' turbines, and put them in standby for any emergency.

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