Optimism Could Head Off 1963 Business Decline

BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT

The business situation will vary with different industries, and hence with different cities. Some defense centers will boom; steel cities will still find the going tough . . . but better than a year ago. Considering the high level of the past 10 years it will not be surprising for 1963 to show a moderate decline in business. If so it should come in the second or third quarter, with recovery in the fourth quarter, followed by a good 1964.

Disposable personal income will remain high. With increased savings deposits and little change in the costof-living, the public should continue to spend freely, especially if merchants maintain their advertising outlays.

Inventories will remain about the same during 1963. But government spending will increase over \$3 billion-largely on defense-and \$2 billion on new roads. Whether manufacturers will hike their expenditures for new machinery in 1963 in view of the depreciation tax credit, I would not now forecast.

All this means that business and employment for your city in 1963 will depend largely upon the attitude of its leading businessmen. If they will be optimistic and spend more on new plants, advertising, and salesmanship, we should have nothing to fear.

STOCKS AND BONDS

My father used to tell me, "It is okay, Roger, for you to make forecasts . . . but never put dates on them!" I forecast that the Dow Jones Industrial Average will register lower sometime during 1963 and

stocks will show an average yield of about 4 per cent. Either dividends must be increased or prices of stocks must go lower. Both cannot continue forever so poorly adjusted.

The above comment refers primarily to industrial stocks. I forecast that both the gross and net earnings of utility stocks will advance during 1963 and for some years thereafter. The utility cumulative preferreds have reached a point whereby they will closely follow interest rates as determined by the Federal Reserve Banks. The utility common stocks should slowly rise in price provided they are not unjustly limited by legislation or by state and federal regulatory commissions.

As for the railroad stocks, I generally feel bearish. A war with Cuba or a world nuclear war breaking out anywhere could cause the stocks of all our transcontinental railroads to go up sharply in price; but down they would come again. We are today in an electronic age and no longer in a railroad age. Those who desire to invest in common stocks should stick to the oils, chemicals, and electronics. Even then keep in mind Newton's Law of Action and Reaction which will always determine the time to buy and sell common stocks.

Regarding bonds I am not pessimistic for 1963. Certainly, the non-taxable bonds well sell higher during 1963. Also, good short-term corporation and gov-ernment bonds will be safest to hold. Long-term corporation and government bonds may sell for less sometime during 1963. Long-term bond prices vary with BUILDING AND REAL ESTATE

There may be some decline in residential building in 1963; and shopping centers in many suburban developments may remain at a standstill for a while. However, so much money is piling up in savings banks which must be invested, it seems that by 1964 many more new homes will be built. In this connection, when purchasing a house or business property, be sure to study the land, which usually improves in price while the value of the building declines.

When constructing new frame houses, build either single homes or houses with only two apartments on the ground floor. There will be considerable new building of brick apartment houses, which should keep filled so long as they are well maintained. Old apartments and old houses will decline in price during 1963.

The less attractive outlook for home building generally does not apply to government or public buildings, or to all commercial buildings. The real estate developers, however, must spend more on advertising in 1963 to meet the growing competition. RETAIL TRADE

Naturally, there will be a seasonal letdown in retail trade after Christmas and the markdowns which follow Jan. 1. That will be the time to look for bargains. Scan the advertisements well. This especially applies to merchandise that depends more or less on style,, such as dresses, coats, hats, and shoes. Buy goodquality items that can be passed down to younger children. Over all, I expect 1963 to see a somewhat higher level of retail trade than has prevailed in 1962.

Purchases made at real markdowns could be good

careful to build up a name for good credit. You can arrange to pay some in 30 days, some in 60 days, and some at 90 days; but be sure to pay a little before your account is due. Good credit at a good retail store will help you and your husband (or wife) when you may need this credit later to buy real estate or start a busines of your own.

CUBAN OUTLOOK

I forecast that the Cuban problem will not be settled in 1963. It may extend until after the 1964 presidential elections. The Russians have removed their missile installations and bombers from Cuba, in accordance with President Kennedy's demands. In return, Mr. Krushchev will undoubtedly want some concessions in Berlin, or Turkey-which now bottles up Russia in the winter due to Turkey's control of the Dardanelles.

Krushchev must placate his people at home by improving rather than reducing their standard of living. I saw this very clearly when I was in Moscow. He helped Castro so that he would have something to trade with the United States, either in connection with Berlin or with our bases which we now have in Europe. Krushchev expected to later withdraw from Cuba when he first decided to help Castro. He knew Russia could continue to use Cuba as a base for Russian submarines. Now both Krushchev and Castro are looking to save face at home

Some think the Cuban fracas will make President Kennedy much tougher with labor here in the United States, but I disagree. Labor leaders may be more reasonable in their demands, but they will continue to have friends at the White House.



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Chemistry 'Bug'