

Speaking of power

personal slants on doings of
interest to power men—some significant, some just odd

Supercritical-pressure studies emphasize efficiency gains. For example, Westinghouse engineers report that a 200,000-kw turbine-generator, to operate at 5000 psi, 1200 F and two reheats, would yield a 5 to 6% gain in over-all plant efficiency compared with a conventional unit (2000 psi, 1100 F). If this looks small, apply it to the roughly half-million tons of coal such a plant would burn yearly.

And don't overlook the big economic factor hidden by concentration on heat-rate comparisons — drastic potential savings in investment cost from sharply shrinking size of nearly all major equipment elements and structures.

Electrical election promises are no better than any others, according to UP. Seems that Mayor Giovanni Morini of Verona, Italy, promised power for one of the suburbs. When he didn't deliver, a landowner filed suit. Court dismissed the case: The mayor wasn't bound by promises made as a private citizen.

Atomic-warfare plans seem to be coming down to earth after stratospheric jitters occasioned by Russian H-bomb claims. No one disputes the seriousness of the situation or the need for far-reaching re-examination of defense policies. Immediate steps, however, are those: (1) Up to \$1 billion more for interceptor aircraft, warning systems, etc. (2) More emphasis, within current budgets, on research and development, particularly of guided missiles. (3) Greater encouragement to industry to disperse facilities and take protective steps.

Atom-bomb protection — and a substantial measure is possible — will get increasing attention in months ahead. Detailed surveys of essential facilities are well under way by Dept. of Commerce and other agencies; industry advisory committees will be asked to help develop protective measures for specific situations.

To encourage building of bomb shelters, blast walls and other protective structures, in existing plants as well as new ones, Office of Defense Mobilization allows a 5-yr. fast tax writeoff on 100% of cost of such measures.

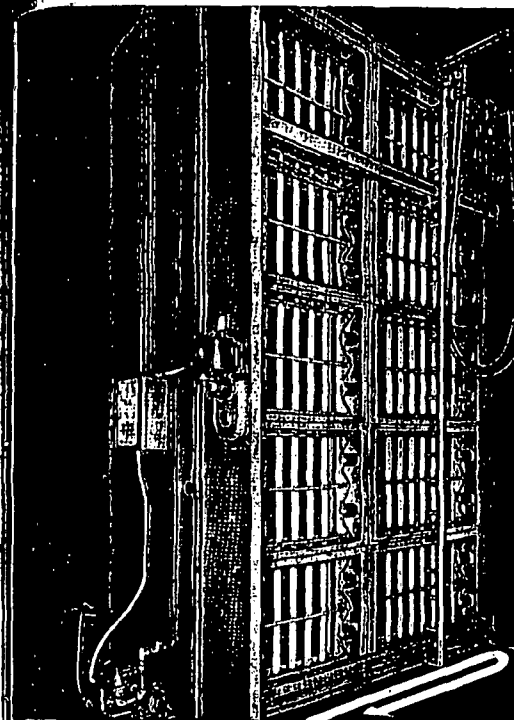
Footnote to jingle printed here last month comes from J P Warren, power consultant with Dow Chemical Co, Freeport, Texas. Down there, they say:

The man who knows how will always have a job
The man who knows why will supervise him
But the man who knows how and why will own the plant!

Expansion and modernization of American industry will continue high in 1954, just about 4% behind 1953's record-setting capital investment. That's the gist of a preliminary survey of plans for capital spending just made by McGraw-Hill's Dept of Economics. Good-news note: electric-power industry is one of several expecting to spend as much (or more) in 1954 as in 1953.

Economy drives, now much in vogue as a result of "recession" talk, always remind me of a railroad chief of motive power who harped on economy day and night. Examining a locomotive-engineer candidate one day, he said, "You're heading into a single-track curve when you see another headlight shining 'round the bend. What would you do?" The answer bore testimony to his preaching: "I'd slam on the brakes, shut off the lubricator, and jump!"

Loe Rowley



NEW

Periodically, new motor-driven washer completely cleans cell plates—re-applies adhesive—by "push-button" operation. Moving nozzles clean thoroughly to full cell depth.

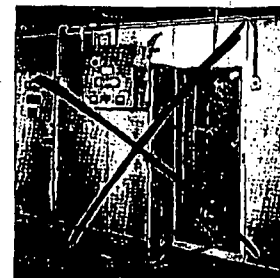
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