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Hodges Cites Industry Need To Modernize

This Holds Key On International Race, He Says

By Jim Reid

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The commerce secretary said there is sufficient know-how right now for all U. S. manufacturing productivity to increase at the rate of 10 percent a year for the next decade, instead of the historical average of 2 percent.

"Think what it would mean to the national wealth if we merely doubled our productivity increase rate—from 2 percent to 4 percent," he said.

Secretary Hodges said the major obstacles to industry modernization in this country have been taxes and lack of technical resources and ideas.

every industry in this area for decades to come."

Hodges was introduced to the luncheon audience by Sen. J. Howard Edmondson. The junior senator substituted for Sen. Mike Monroney, who was unable to present because of another commitment.

In introducing the distinguished speaker, Edmondson joked that he was substituting for Bud Wilkinson. "Bud was asked to do this," he said, "but he hasn't been able to make up his mind yet whether he wants to."

Actually, Wilkinson was not invited to the confer-

The United States is in a race for international trade, and modernization of industry is a key factor in helping to win that race, Luther H. Hodges, U. S. Secretary of Commerce said in Oklahoma City Friday.

"Through modernization," he said, "with its resulting increase in productivity, business becomes more profitable. It can pay better wages. It can offer more goods at lower prices."

The secretary addressed a joint luncheon of the Okla-

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homa City Chamber of Commerce and the Southwest Conference on Industrial Modernization.

150 Attend

The one-day conference attracted more than 150 business and industry leaders from over the state to Municipal Auditorium.

The city conference is the second of 15 that will be held this year in various parts of the nation under partial sponsorship of the U. S. Commerce Department.

Suggestions Made

He offered three suggestions to businessmen for carrying out a modernization program:

ONE — Management must become completely familiar with domestic competition in its own industry.

TWO — Management must be more vigilant against foreign competition.

THREE — Businessmen must be more alert to invasions of their industries. For example, the invasion of the textile industry by the chemical industry.

Hodges praised city leaders for their foresight in future planning:

"Your plans for a world airport to handle the supersonic plane, for the development of a barge canal port, for the expansion of convention facilities, for increasing foreign exports, for augmenting your water resources, and for becoming a focal point for medical research in the southwest — all these point to a sense of purpose, a sense of responsibility, a vision for the future that will be the well-being of every person and

ence, a chamber spokesman said.

Talking to newsmen informally Friday afternoon, Hodges noted that Oklahoma is better than the national average in modernization of industry.

He said a study based on the percentage of machine tools more than 10 years old that are still in use shows the national average at 64 percent, while Oklahoma is 60 percent.

Reminded that the Central Intelligence Agency reported Russia lagging in fertilizer production, Hodges said he favored the sale of

fertilizer to the Soviets on the same basis as wheat sales.

"We should get cash on the barrelhead," he said, "not long-term credit."

While in the city Friday, Secretary Hodges presented the president's "E" award for excellence in exporting to Aero Commander, Inc.

The presentation was made to Thomas Sim III, vice president of Aero's overseas division, and E. J. Williams, vice president of Rockwell Standard Corp., Aero's parent company.

The award includes a blue and gold citation and an "E" pennant.