

# Editorial



Publisher Michael Goldstein and Rick Norment, Executive Director, AGMA at Gear Expo '87.

Assorted thoughts while in a holding pattern over O'Hare . . .

I recently returned from England where I spent time checking out the overseas markets and attending a machinery auction. Buyers came to this auction from all over — Germany, Italy, Switzerland, India, Australia, America — and the prices were astonishing. Often buyers were paying in pounds sterling the same amount or more than they would have paid in U.S. dollars. In other words, they were paying, say, £10,000 for a machine that would have sold for \$10,000 here. With every pound worth about \$1.70 at today's exchange rates, that's a hefty 70% more than a comparable machine would cost here. Prices for consumer goods — food, clothing, automobiles, gasoline (£1.66 or \$2.82 per U.S. gallon) — reflect the same price difference.

American products are very inexpensive on the world market today,

and, judging from the prices at that auction in England, much of the industrialized world is not aware of the fact. I wonder how much of that ignorance is due to the fact that we simply have not done a very good job of selling ourselves overseas. Maybe we're not effectively informing the rest of the world that real estate is not the only bargain in the U.S. today. That 70% advantage is a powerful selling tool we should not neglect.

Other news from England: Long-time readers may remember that on my last trip to England, I spent a day at the races, driving some pretty impressive, powerful cars with my old friend Ian Exeter, part-owner of the company manufacturing the Lister Jaguar. This trip I didn't make it to the factory in Weatherhead, but I did get a preview of the newest high-tech toy for the super-rich — the Lister LeMans. This car is loosely based on the Jaguar XJ-S with a redesigned body and suspension and a 7-liter, V-12 engine capable of 496 BHP at 6200 rpm, with 500 lb/ft. of torque at 3250 rpm. Only the Callo-way Twin Turbo Corvette, I believe, has better numbers, and that only with the torque. With a maximum speed of 200 mph, this supercar sells for a mere



£121,000. (That's about \$200,000 for those of you who keep your petty cash in U.S. currency.) Within weeks of the product announcement, deposits on a dozen of the cars had already been taken. Hard to believe there are folk around with that kind of loose change in their pockets. Next year, when I visit my son at school in England, I may get a chance to wrestle with this new breed of cat.

More mundane, but possibly more important matters: All reports I've received about the ASME 5th International Power and Transmission Gearing Conference have been excellent. This meeting, which is held only once every five years, draws gear engineering experts from all over the world. Some 125 papers on everything from gear design to manufacturing to belts and chains and couplings and clutches were presented. We were pleased to see a large number of our contributing authors there either as presenters or participants. The proceedings of the conference fill two fat books . . . Lots of important late night reading about the cutting edge of the industry between those orange covers . . . For those of you who missed it this time, it might be something to think about for 1994. A call to ASME for a list of the papers might be a worthwhile investment as well.

. . . AGMA's joint program with industry to get gear machinery into the hands of college engineering students is expanding. In June, Caterpillar is making available two Fellows gear shapers to qualified schools. Precision Gear of Twinsburg, OH, and Fairfield Manufacturing of Lafayette, IN, have followed suit. Precision Gear has donated two Fellows shapers, one each to Ohio State and Central State University (Ohio). Fairfield has loaned

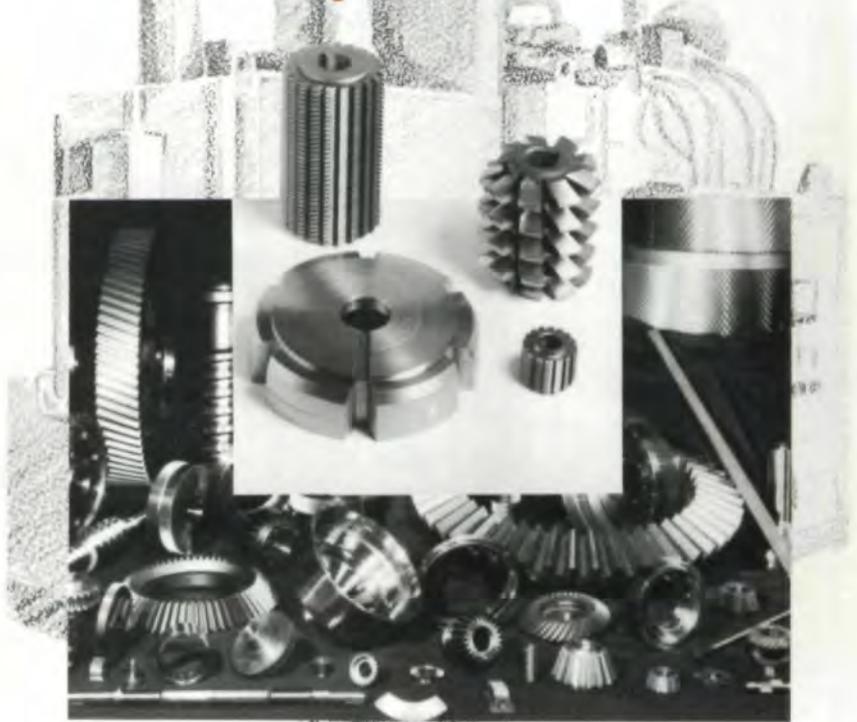


OSU tooling and has a program giving engineering students "hands on" experience at their Lafayette facility. It's good to see some of you out there taking concrete steps to support our engineering schools and develop an interest in gearing among young engineers . . .

. . . AGMA's Gear Expo '89 is coming up faster than we think. If you haven't already made plans to attend, this is the time to do so. The Gear Expo is a good way to "take the pulse" of the industry. Gear Expo '89 will be 60% larger in terms of floor space than the 1987 show. A number of heavy machinery companies as well as other gear industry suppliers will be represented. The show is being held in conjunction with the AGMA Fall Technical Meeting, giving attendees the chance to both check out the new product lines and the new directions in gear engineering research. Pittsburgh will be the place to be in November to stay in touch with the gear business.

  
Michael Goldstein, Editor/Publisher

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