

Ferdie J. Deering

AUG. 29 1978

Can Technology Be Free of Politics?

A writer suggests that the vehicle of the future may be a "world car", assembled from components manufactured in various countries. Other products might also be made in this way.

International trade, rapid transportation, worldwide communications and major wars or threats of wars have accelerated the move toward "one world" philosophies advocated by socialists, communists and certain others.

The concept of a "world car" brings additional, but not new, aspects into the political "one world" picture.

One is universal application of technology on a scale that might outrun political influences. Technology has been simply defined as scientific knowledge applied to problems.

In his new book titled "The Republic of Technology", Daniel J. Boorstin describes technology as a leveler, a democratizer, and a homogenizer of peoples. He says a republic of technology already exists,

shaped mainly by the United States.

Technology has never developed evenly, nor has it been put into use uniformly. Advancements have come in spurts, intermingled with "dry spells" when notable discoveries were scarce.

On various occasions, smart people have thought the ultimate in technology had been reached. In 1889, the director of the U.S. Patent Office urged that the office be closed because "Everything that can be invented has been invented." He was wrong.

Rapid and widespread application of technology enabled the United States to jump ahead of older and slower nations during the industrial revolution, but now others are getting ahead.

Effects of inventions and discoveries are cumulative. As Boorstin says, "Nothing can be uninvented." Thus, we have an "enlarging pool of knowledge equally valid everywhere."

Businesses have succeeded because ingenuity was used to gain ad-

vantages in profitable markets. What happens if industrial research is stifled by making discoveries available to competitors here and abroad through sharing of technology?

Extensive sharing of technology is being advocated by certain economists, politicians and businessmen.

"Cooperation (in sharing technology) is not only important as a means of closing the technology gap," says an article in *The Financier* magazine, "but to a growing extent it is the only means of gaining access to many foreign markets."

It may be possible to build a "world car" or "world anything", but can it be done without allowing world politics to limit our freedom and smother individual ambition to succeed?

Totalitarian governments do not have the same concepts of "sharing" and "cooperation" that exist among free peoples.