

# Firms are folding at a record rate

Business failures soared to record levels in the first three months of this year, and more than 13 per cent of company liquidations were in the motor industry.

Disclosing this today, the credit rating agency Dun and Bradstreet said businesses were being liquidated at the rate of 174 a week.

This means 2,263 firms disappearing in a 13-week period.

"Not only do these figures show a marked increase on the same period last year, they reflect a significant acceleration of failures throughout 1980 and into 1981," said the report.

In the motor industry there were 287 failed companies and 13 per cent of all the bankruptcies were in this sector.

## Gloomiest picture

But for the West Midlands, the gloomiest picture was among the engineering firms.

One in five of the 288 liquidations in the quarter were in the Birmingham area. The worst-hit industry nationally was building, and most of the firms which went out of business were in London and the Home Counties.

One of the alarming new developments disclosed in the survey is that liquidations are now spreading into the service industries.

There were 335 failures and this figure does not include retailers.

## News in brief

### Printing system set up

BL's subsidiary Unipart has installed a £146,000 Honeywell page printing system at Cowley which will be linked with the data centre of BL Systems at Redditch. Its first use will be a price list of parts, supplied monthly to 440 distribution depots and dealers.

### Status upped in Japan

Albright and Wilson is stepping up its Tokyo office in Japan from representational to trading status, as its business in East Asia grows and consolidates. The company's current trade with Japan is around £8,000,000 a year in sales of phosphorus, related chemicals and detergent raw materials.

## Production line plant deal won

Evening Mail Reporter

A Black Country firm has won a second contract to up-date production facilities at Ford's tractor plant in Basildon.

The new order has been placed with A. and H. Jones, of the Alumwell Industrial Estate at Fleck, just after it has completed a major installation at Basildon.

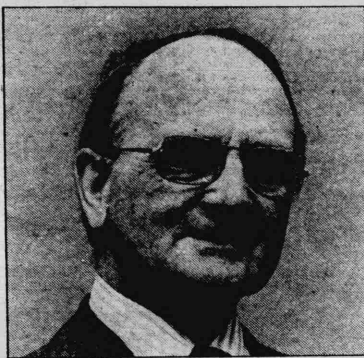
Under the first £135,000 contract, awarded by GEC, Jones completely replaced forged chains and trolleys on the conveyor equipment of the assembly and painting lines.

This involved supplying 998 chains and two-wheeled trolleys.

Now the Walsall company will carry out another replacement programme at the tractor factory.

It will be installed during the July shutdown at the plant, when the conveyor equipment will be extended by a further 450 feet.

Jones is a subsidiary of LK Industrial Investment.



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