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Shelve with: Western Assembly on Changing World of Work

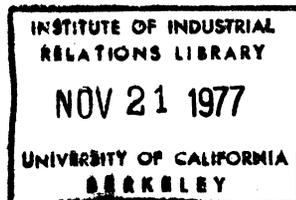
Remarks by  
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Western Assembly - Carmel  
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"WORK IN A CHANGING WORLD"

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Remarks by Louis B. Lundborg, Western  
Assembly on Changing World of Work, May  
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The topic of today's assembly, "The Changing World of Work" could for my purposes be re-stated as "work in a changing world". I say that for more than semantic or dialectic reasons. There are substantive reasons why I should like to focus on the world as well as on the work.

You have had presented to you a background volume of briefing papers, and an agenda for discussion in the group meetings. In both of these are outlined issues and concepts that arise out of any thoughtful examination of work as a central fact and force in human existence. It will be my purpose today to suggest to you that, compelling as these issues and concepts are, it is idle to consider them in a vacuum. It will be productive only to examine them in the context of what is happening to the world in which the work is being done.

It is my thesis that each of the issues that you will be discussing: the nature of work, work satisfaction, job enrichment, place of work, job security, compensation - the very availability of work and to whom - will all be affected more by what is happening to the whole world economy than by anything that can be done separately on any single issue.

And what is it that is happening? It is the re-ordering of the world's economy and of its society that is proceeding out of one inescapable fact: that our present exponential rate of industrial growth, based on finite, non-renewable natural resources, can no longer be sustained.

It will be my purpose here today to try to establish with you three major points:

First, that a transition to more limited growth is inevitable.

Second, that proposals advanced to date as to how to accomplish the transition either have flaws that would fail to meet the problem at all, or contain ingredients that would alienate many elements of society whose understanding and support would be needed if solutions are to be found - so alienate them as to make them feel that, disastrous as our present course may be, the alternative is worse.

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Third, that the work-concepts that are concerning such people as you not only have their own validity, but are reason enough for devoting more attention and effort to making the transition successful.

I shall plan to expand on these ingredients of the problem just sufficiently to make as clear as I can what it is that needs to be solved; then to suggest some steps that I believe must be included in any effort toward solution.

First, while I am sure that this audience does not have to be reminded, I think it is important to proceed from the premise that many of the non-renewable raw materials that are most critical to modern, sophisticated industry are disappearing throughout the entire world, and will ultimately (within visible time) be exhausted.

The energy crisis is only an index, a gauge, of our excessive use of all kinds of irreplaceable resources. It is our Distant Early Warning of what lies ahead.

That is why it is not Pollyanna-ish to say that the energy crisis is a blessing in disguise. I would hope that it will not be allowed to pass away and be forgotten before we have learned the lessons it has to teach.

It has become popular to speak of the energy crisis as only the tip of the iceberg, and indeed it is. But those who use that figure of speech are usually referring to the other shortages of things (plastics, for example) that are in short supply because plants have not been built to meet the booming worldwide demand. That is not the real problem. The real problem is that all those shortages combined are truly the tip of a much larger, much more profound iceberg.

Under the surface of the waters we are sailing is the cold, hard fact that we are using up irreplaceable resources at a rate that simply cannot be sustained. Building of more plants to use them up faster is not the answer.

The current scurrying around to find alternative sources of energy focuses attention only on the visible tip of the problem, not on the underlying causes. In the long run, technology is altogether likely to develop energy out of self-regenerating sources such as sun and wind, as it will tap such previously untouched (but still irreplaceable) fossil sources as oil shale and tar sands. But by the time we have found ways to produce more energy, we will be drawing closer to the real crisis in other essential resources. Copper, manganese and other basic nonferrous metals are already in acutely short supply; other more exotic and rare metals, scarcely known to consumers but essential to industrial processes, are fast disappearing.

Even pulpwood for paper manufacture is a case in point. There is a worldwide shortage of pulp today; we are cutting trees, worldwide, far faster than they are being replaced, and, worse yet, we are depleting the soil on which trees can grow. Many forests, including those in America, can become desert within a few generations. Yet what do we waste more prodigally than paper?

To responsible people, what real difference does it make whether we run out of space and resources in 40 years or 400?

So the current energy crisis provides us with a dress rehearsal - the trial run of a drama that we must some day see enacted on a much larger stage.

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With this early warning, we have the blessing of time to plan an orderly transition into an era that could be catastrophic if we allowed it to overtake us without preparation.

We hear it said that we are short of materials because we won't let the free market operate; but that is only part of the story. The market is a very efficient mechanism (when it operates) - the best we have ever known for the allocation of resources. But it does not protect those resources from ultimate destruction. In fact, it often hastens that destruction, as it has done in the course of what is often described as a market economy.

A few years ago, when the young people began to decry our "garbage economy," our first knee-jerk reaction was to bristle and to write off everything they were saying as simply reflecting the subversive teachings of their left-wing professors. We added a few grumblings to the effect that this was typical of young people who had never had to work for anything, had never known want or privation - and now were biting the hand that was feeding them so well.

But looking back to that period, we begin to see that this was not just another wave of adolescent nonsense, to be put away in the newspaper files along with goldfish swallowing, flagpole sitting, panty raids and streaking.

What the young were protesting initially was not the products themselves, but the fact that they were expected to worship - indeed dedicate themselves - to the whole production-consumption process that their elders had established as the ruling force in their lives. They sensed, better than the rest of us did, that an extensive national ideology had grown up that equated democracy, patriotism and religion with the free enterprise system - which in turn was defined as "growth for growth's sake." That ideology had evolved gradually over a period of years

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and, once it was in full flower, its effect was to make it virtually a patriotic duty for everyone to consume.

Indeed, one reason establishment types got so furiously angry at the hippie types was that this segment of the young represented a threat to the whole concept of accelerating consumption. Their renunciation of conventional dress, their adoption of sandals (or bare feet) and ragged jeans as the uniform and symbol was an open affront and challenge to far more than the clothing industry. It challenged the whole fabric of the production-consumption syndrome. (The fact that it eventually helped to spawn a great wave of new styles for the garment and fashion industry only added an extra note of irony.)

There were absurdities, to be sure, in all this. Buying new jeans, then ripping off the bottoms and sewing on make-believe patches made no more apparent sense than throwing away a good dress (or a good automobile) simply because it was out of style. But if it helped to make patching, repairing and "make-do" respectable again, even the pseudo patches may not have been so absurd after all.

It would be both hypocritical and unrealistic to contend that materialism should have no place in our lives. But it is a far cry from Puritanical, ascetic self-denial to the kind of competitive, conspicuous (and wasteful) consumption that has ruled our lives for the past generation or more.

When day after day more goes into our garbage cans or down our disposal drains than goes onto our tables (let alone into our stomachs); when community after community across the land is seeking new sites for garbage dumps because the old ones are filled up with the refuse of our throw-away society - at that point we are writing a prescription for well-deserved trouble.

We have not reached this point entirely by accident: for a long time the concept of planned obsolescence has been accepted as a deliberate and admirable philosophy of management. When one of the top executives of the

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automobile industry was quoted, a generation ago, as saying "we don't build automobiles, we build obsolescence", his words were applauded as a fine example of industrial strategy that would give vigor to the economy. The fact that such planned obsolescence is also horrendously wasteful of natural resources got little attention at the time.

And now that it is getting attention - now that thoughtful people are recognizing the folly of the course we are traveling - it is not easy to say how we are to get off this course and onto one that we can follow safely.

Of the prescriptions that have been offered up to now, some are too simplistic. For example, Zero Population Growth is proposed as the complete answer. To be sure, ZPG has to be included in the answer, but it is not the complete answer - it is only one ingredient in the mix. Why? For two overwhelming reasons: one, that our rate of industrial growth, our use of natural resources, has been far greater than the increase in population; and two, that population control cannot operate fast enough to do the job. The present mix of ages in the world's population is such - it is so young - that even if fertility at barely a replacement rate - 2.25 births, average, per family - could be achieved tomorrow, total population would not stop increasing before we had added another 35 - 40% to our present population. And of course that ideal is not going to be achieved tomorrow. Experts in the field project that the earliest it is reasonable to hope for stabilized world population is the middle of next century - and that by that time the population will total 15 - 16,000,000,000 or nearly four times the present total. With critical resources being exhausted even by today's population, it is mind-boggling to think what will happen to those resources, and to other materials that are not now on the "endangered" list, when the number of consumers is quadrupled.

So measures must be sought other than population control alone.

But the other measures pose their own variety of threats, threats to almost every segment of society. Before we can talk about solutions or remedies, we need to understand the nature of these threats.

In considering how to move toward limited growth, it is just as well that we "can't get there from here" in a literal sense. If it were possible to make it in one jump - if we could do it all overnight - the prospect of dislocations would be so frightening that hardly anyone would want to start the journey. The consensus would be that "we would rather muddle along on the course we're on; we would rather take our chances with this one, that might work out somehow, than to plunge into something that we know is going to be disaster."

What are the disasters that people see down the road to limited growth?

First, and most universally important, is jobs. People have to eat. When they see that today's jobs depend on a booming, expanding economy - on producing the very kinds of things we are saying are being wasted; when they hear talk about cutting back - or cutting out - some of the making of those things, it is going to sound like cutting out jobs. So there has to be an answer, and a convincing one, to that threat.

Only one thing is worse than having a dehumanizing job, and that is having no job and no prospect of one. That is why so many people now settle for such unrewarding, unsatisfying jobs.

If we could safely say "this era of industrial growth and expansion will last long enough that I won't have to worry about it, and neither will my kids," I wouldn't blame any wage earner for saying "Let's not fool around -

let's not tinker with this system. It's not perfect, but it's a job; we're eating, we've got a car and a TV, we take a little vacation every year - let's not mess around with anything that might queer that."

But we can't safely say any of that. If you think today's generation has nothing to be concerned about - or that today is too soon to start planning and acting, let me remind you that before today's/college graduates are 50 years old our world population will have doubled; and that a child born today could live to see the world population stabilize at the 15 - 16,000,000,000 level. And let me remind you that neither the population totals nor their consequences will suddenly arrive on a given day, like January 1, 2000 or 4th of July, 2050 - they start today, and they multiply geometrically with each day and year.

Corollary to the threat of job loss is the fear that future job opportunities and career opportunities for today's young people would be narrowed. Not only the young themselves but their parents, their academic counselors and all the network of professionals and volunteers who are involved in preparing the young for their futures can feel threatened or concerned. Fortunately this cloud has some of the brightest silver lining, as I shall point out in a moment.

Another area that has some silver linings also has some clouds that can look very dark at first glance: we have become a gadget-happy civilization; and no matter how piously we deplore the electric tooth brush or the electric carving knife, each of us has his own pet gadgets that he would hate to give up. This one involves everyone, right across the board: the housewife (or should I say "houseperson" today?) the office person and the factory person - white collar, blue collar, no collar.

The fear of losing those luxuries or conveniences could lead great masses of people to oppose any move toward orderly transition.

Related to this concern is the fear that innovation and improvements would stop. Some of this fear is a predictable rationalization from the concern about gadgets that I have just mentioned; but some is a genuine conviction that human progress is linked to mechanical and technological progress. Those who hold either of those concerns may have to do some adjusting of their thinking; but neither has to be completely abandoned.

One of the most legitimate concerns, and one that calls for the greatest wisdom in meeting it, is that so many of the steps that will have to be taken will require increasing government intervention and involvement. The fear that shrinking supplies of critical raw materials will have to be placed under government allocation - and even under some form of worldwide government control - is enough to send chills up and down any enterpriser's spine. The prospect that many of the substitute activities, to provide employment for those displaced, might have to be government projects, brings back memories of the W.P.A. in the Great Depression.

The greatest shock of all would be to the investment process. Today's investment concepts are predicated on "performance", which in turn generally equates to growth. The impact and influence of this concept extend far beyond the investment fraternity - it is so pervasive and far-reaching that it puts managements under pressure from many directions. The sources of this pressure - shareholders, both individual and institutional; beneficiaries of institutional investments; and a wide range of such secondary participants in the process - represent a potential bloc of resistance to any change or interference with the status quo.

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I single out and identify all these sources of resistance and opposition not to suggest that we therefore should drop all thought of pursuing the transition - quite the reverse! The very resistance, and the problems from which it stems, make it imperative that we move ahead with our preparing and that we lose no time. Every step of the preparation - the studies, the planning, the building of public understanding and support - will consume endless amounts of precious time.

So where do we start?

We don't start with percentage cutbacks or anything that resembles percentage cutbacks. Monetary, fiscal or other measures to dampen economic growth won't do the trick, because they don't get at the root of the problem.

Where we start is with something that could be called psychological - which is not to minimize its importance. It involves the restructuring of attitudes - attitudes of consumers and attitudes of producers. That in turn will lay down the base for the policies, and finally the practices, that will accomplish the transition.

For decades now - probably a half century or more - we have been caught up in the attitude, carefully nurtured by advertising and merchandising pressures, that when a new model of anything appeared, we should abandon the old one. When an appliance stopped working well, it was time to junk it and get a new one. It was too expensive to have it repaired - and of course none of us knew how to repair it. Fashions in houses, home furnishings, automobiles and gadgets joined the parade of fashions in clothes - and nothing ruled by fashion was supposed to last long.

Thrift as a virtue became decidedly unfashionable. Spending and consuming were the road to the good life.

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All this needs to be reversed. I mentioned "make do" earlier, but it needs to be re-emphasized. We need to build the attitude that there is no stigma, but the reverse, in having older models still running well; older things of all kinds kept up and used.

This of course calls for a parallel attitude in industry. Automobiles, appliances and other machinery must be built to last longer, and to be more easily repaired and restored when something does wear out.

It ultimately will need to go a little deeper than that: when we have said "we put too much importance on material things" it has been questioned as unworldly idealism, pious sentimentalism or at worst just plain left wing radicalism. But there is real, genuine hard-nosed merit in saying that we should not judge each other, therefore we should not compete with each other, on the basis of our possession or our show of things.

At first blush, this may sound like a return to Puritanism; but it need not be.

For consumers, the prospect even holds some positive attractions, as many of them are coming to realize with considerable satisfaction. People in growing numbers have begun to make noises as if just discovering that they have been "conned" into buying things they didn't need, and would be glad to have an excuse to stop doing so. We saw this same reaction during World War II - a visible, audible sense of relief as people found that they no longer had to keep up with the Joneses because the Joneses couldn't get things, either.

The return to simple pleasures was one of the few happy events of wartime. Competitive pressure to consume conspicuously had been a demonstrable source of neuroses throughout our society, and an escape from that pressure without individually having to be a rebel - especially to have patriotic endorsement for the escape - was a welcome release. The same can be possible in the future.

These new attitudes will be needed before people will be willing to accept and support the necessary public policy changes. Policies will have to be adopted, and implemented, at every step of this transition.

Many of these policies will be as much concerned with "what we don't do" as with "what we do". For example, in the area of Zero Population Growth: when the people of this and other countries become sufficiently aroused to the imperative of stabilizing population, we will stop giving incentives for population increase. and many of our welfare programs As a matter of public policy, we will change our tax policies/which today put a premium on having children.

It can then be public policy to examine all new proposals - and review many existing practices - in the industrial field to evaluate their effect on the use of scarce resources of all kinds. For example, all over this country there are local and state programs to promote industrial expansion on a "growth for growth's sake" basis, without regard to basic needs. Incentives and subsidies are provided at public expense - tax benefits, cheap land, financing aids, market research and the like - to encourage plant location. As proper as these activities appeared to be when they started - and as some of them may still be, they must be questioned and tested now.

Policy instruments can be employed to apply incentives and penalties that will redirect production and consumption in the conserving direction. Horsepower taxes on automobiles are an obvious example and the principle can be applied to many other consumer practices, like parking, to encourage users to "think small". Emission taxes can have a dual impact: as they operate to bring social costs and private costs into conjunction, they not only will stimulate moves to clean up the environment, but will result in more recycling and increased emphasis on durability of products, and will even cause price shifts that tend to favor services over goods.

On the affirmative front, there is a whole new world awaiting those who will turn their imaginations and their energies toward it. There is as much of a frontier, providing as much potential employment, in the restoring, regeneration and rebuilding of resources as there has been in the using up. The present recycling of materials like paper is the barest beginning of what can be done with used materials. (Not really the beginning even, because the use of scrap iron in steel production should have pointed the way generations ago.) The recovery of chemicals from stack gases suggests what may be possible in another area.

The development of alternative energy sources is just now occupying major attention and it must of course be pursued. But the sources that are getting the most attention - coal, oil, shale and tar sands - are in themselves only stopgaps in the long view of history, because even they are exhaustible; and they involve a new wave of insult to the body of the earth.

The energy field that offers the real challenge for pioneers is the field of the self-regenerating sources - the sun, wind and tides. Because they cannot be done overnight, they fit into the pattern of transition; but the effort should start immediately - not only to make the energy available when and where it is needed, but to start now with another large increment of shifting in the employment of people as they are displaced from the declining industries.

But there is another field of endeavor that in a true sense is the most basic of all: the restoration of the earth itself. Our farming practices, our lumbering practices, our mining practices - and our urbanized practices that put asphalt on rich soil - have all taken a tragic toll of our land. For all the increased yields that have come from fertilizers, pesticides and improved seeds, the land itself has in many parts of the world been badly depleted. To

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feed 15 billion people on a shrinking field, we shall need to do even more than practice the adage "Put back into the soil as much as you take out" - we shall need to address ourselves as a major industry to the rebuilding and revigorating of already damaged soils.

I said earlier that there were some pluses, some silver linings in our cloudy future. One of these is in the area of the clouds that look the blackest now - that of jobs. In addition to all the regenerative, restorative activities on which I have just been touching, there will be a new surge of emphasis on repair and maintenance. The reinstatement of "make do", which will be compelled by the expense and scarcity of new products, will give birth to a whole new field of employment. Some of the repair and maintenance of home appliances and machinery will be done at home: some of us who haven't lifted a wrench since the days of the Model T will learn to tinker with the newer ones - and we'll brag about it the way I did when I took my Model T apart and put it together again with no parts left over. But when we have exhausted all our own skills, there still will be a need for professional help. We complain now that service of this kind is too expensive; and it still will be - but it will be worth it, compared with the alternatives.

The real silver lining in this development, though, is in job satisfaction. From the first days of the assembly line (or before) we have deplored the dehumanizing effects of mass production. The labor of keeping machines running, both in industry and in the home, will be of a higher order than the labor of making those machines in the first place. It will call for a higher order of skills, and it will be far more satisfying labor. And, while it is impossible to quantify this segment of our future economy, I am convinced that its magnitude will not be trivial.

Of even greater magnitude will be the shift toward employment in the other service industries, of which repair and maintenance are only a part. Service activities, non-resource-consuming activities, can employ an almost infinitely expanding number of people once the productions of the basic physical needs has been taken care of.

This could answer a couple of the fears I mentioned a moment ago: the fear of stifled career opportunity for the young, and the fear of stifled innovation for improvement in the quality of life. I am aware that there are many scientists who believe that scientific research and development are subject to diminishing returns, and that we cannot expect continued basic scientific discoveries on the scale of the last 100 years. Particularly in the field of large-scale, institutionalized R & D I am sure it is true. But I am one who believes that creativity can never be permanently stifled; and if it is encouraged and guided into the right paths, our future creative innovative minds will be uncovering new ways to conserve and regenerate as their precessors found ways to exploit and consume.

I come now to some of the coldest, hardest facts of all. If I were to stop now - if I had given you only a few of the encouraging alternatives that are available to us, and did not lay before you some of the truly explosive problems that I have not even mentioned, this entire talk could be written off as a foolish exercise in starry-eyed optimism. When I mention them now, it is not to be frightening or alarmist, but to add one more area where I think we must direct urgent attention and earnest effort. Because again, I think there are answers to the dangers.

The banding together of the oil-producing Arab countries to bargain for higher prices for their oil, and to exact political advantage in exchange for selling the oil at all, caught a large part of the world by shocked surprise. It should not have, because at least a few thoughtful observers had been warning of this possibility as long as four or five years ago. Moreover, their warning had not been limited to oil - it had been pointed out that minerals of all kinds were involved. The now-rich, developed countries are becoming increasingly dependent on the now-poor, underdeveloped countries for critical raw materials.

If it were strictly a matter of price, it could be traumatic enough to those who have counted on the present distribution of wealth remaining forever undisturbed - because this could achieve one of the most drastic, radical redistributions of wealth in the world's history. We are agonizing now over what the price increase in Arab oil will do to the world's monetary system - this is relatively short run, until other sources are developed, and is peanuts compared with the total potential of such raw-material confrontations around the world.

But money is not the whole problem. We have already seen how massive and breakdowns and tie-ups can result from fuel/energy shortages. As we look down the road at mounting populations and shrinking resources, the possibilities of not mere tie-ups, but complete collapse, multiply. These hazards, moreover, are further multiplied by the increasing interdependence that is inevitable as the whole world begins scrambling after the same scarce commodities. The stereotype of the starving mob watching the rich family eating lavishly in the big house on the hill, and storming up the hill to seize the tempting food, is not without parallel here - but with the paradox that the starving countries by then might be today's prospering countries, still powerful enough militarily to be tempted to seize what they needed in order to avoid economic collapse.

Even if we avert this hazard - which I think we must - the interdependence will still leave so little margin for error as to compel a degree of world collaboration that we have never dreamed of.

This is the one big target toward which we all must aim; and it is a goal that will call for all the wisdom, creativity and dedication that we can muster. These qualities, and more, will be needed in an unprecedented degree because we need to do more than just achieve the physical, economic goals - we need to do it with a minimum loss of human freedom. I have to mention that because the most obvious answer to everything I have mentioned

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is government control, and on a global scale. The agony of this prospect is compounded when I remind you that the automatic consequence of scarcity through all of history has been inflation. Our own track record in combatting inflation does not encourage optimism, but neither does it justify despair or surrender. When inflation is caused by scarcity, the remedy will probably have to include allocation and other controls - never palatable, and especially not if they would have to be international in scope. But they will not be made more palatable by shutting our eyes and closing our minds to the possibility of their ultimately being needed.

I said at the outset that there was a third major point that I wanted to establish with you. I have saved it until now because I wanted to present it in the context of everything else that I have been saying. It has to do with the work-concepts as such, and their relevance to the limited growth issue. I have touched on several of the work issues in a glancing way as I have gone along, but I would like to put them together in a summary fashion.

While I do contend that trends in the work-concept are at the mercy of these world forces - even more pointedly, that many of the trends have been initiated and nurtured in an affluent and expansive economy which is now threatened by these world forces - many of these new concepts now have a validity and a vitality of their own that will at least struggle to survive regardless of the world setting. So we need to recognize them as an element that must be reckoned with as a specific component of the transition to limited growth.

Let me cite just a few of the work issues as examples of the inter-relation: the four-day week, job security, work satisfaction and the work ethic.

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We might think that a variant of the four-day week could be applied as a specific answer to the problem of finding jobs for those displaced by reduced growth - in other words, to manufacture jobs by spreading the work. For a while we may do that; but we cannot count on it, as we once thought we could. The four-day week as currently being discussed is a phenomenon of an affluent society, and an expanding one. In a stabilized - let alone a shrinking - economy, something less simplistic would have to be found.

On the matter of job security, it has often been said that the only real security a person could have is what he has in his own head and hands - that everything else can be taken away from him by economic or political calamity, but that no one can take away what a man knows or knows how to do.

That was true in a simpler world, and it is pathetically true today - the difference being that in that simpler world, virtually everything was done by people, and even their first machines required skill to operate. Today, things are made by machines; the least skilled workers running machines are the most vulnerable to replacement; and even the more skilled workers work on machines they don't own, and can't use except on a job someone else controls.

There has been a considerable shift, in the past quarter-century, away from factory employment into the service industries. But even in the office - in great masses of the so-called white-collar jobs - the task of the worker is governed by the machine. The machine, instead of an assembly-line belt, is a computer; and the hand tool, instead of a wrench, is a card-puncher or an encoding machine. It is cleaner, it is less brutally back-breaking - but it is just as boring. The headaches, the neckaches, the tension syndromes are just about as prevalent, I suspect, as they were in Henry Ford's Dearborn factory.

There is no black-lung problem in the EDP centers of the insurance companies, banks or government offices - but the alcohol problem and the drug problem - let alone turnover and absenteeism - are evidence that shifting the locus or the manual content of work does not solve all its emotional problems.

People have always lived in some fear - from the most primitive times to the present day. But it is one thing to fear elements that you might be able to protect yourself against - even wild tigers or wild Indians; it is another thing to fear the whims of a boss or the cycles of an economy.

The work ethic could be expected to have more force when a worker knew that industrious application to work would sharpen his skills as an artisan; but when he sees no way in which his work improvement is going to be measured, and no way in which he is going to get ahead financially except at the whim of a supervisor or of an impersonal company, why should he be very impressed by a dogma that tells him hard work is a virtue?

These are all valid concerns, in any setting and in any period of a cycle; they become magnified geometrically in the face of the kind of change that I think is coming down the road toward us. If that change is mis-handled (or not handled at all) it can destroy all that has been done in the past century to give more dignity to human effort. Wisely handled, it could actually enhance the gains of that century.

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There are two obvious roads we can travel in moving from our present exponential growth toward a pattern of limited growth - and neither road is without its hazards.

We can decide that the worst of the consequences of our present course - including its ultimate collapse or paralysis - are so far off that it won't affect us, so - to hell with it! We'll enjoy what we have while we have it, and let some later generation worry about what comes next.

Or we can start now to plan and to take the steps that would be needed to implement any plan.

A responsible people, with responsible leaders, would not hesitate in choosing the second road, which is the responsible road - the road of facing the facts and preparing to meet them.

In closing, I can only hope that we will follow the counsel of a friend of mine who used to paraphrase the Book of Proverbs by saying "With all thy getting - get going!"