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# Information Society Believed Ahead

**S**OCIOLOGISTS predict that in the future more people will be employed in service-type jobs, fewer in production and we will live in what is called an "Information Society."

The reduction in force for production has been made possible by utilization of machines and robots to do tasks that might be costly, distasteful, hazardous or slow when performed manually.

It is reported that more people now are employed in miscellaneous service-type jobs, such as data processing, hotels and restaurants, than in all of manufacturing within this country.

Statistics show only 20.5 million workers in manufacturing and 20.8 million in wholesale and retail trade out of a total of some 92 million in the nation's work force.

Authorities on the subject speak of the changes in striking terminology such as "The Restructuring of America," as if this were the first time that our country (or the world) had experienced such shifts.

A similar change took place in agriculture about 50 years ago, re-

sulting in displacement of millions of families who no longer were needed for manual labor on farms. Will somewhat the same thing happen as the number of factory workers continues to dwindle?

Throughout the world's history, revolutionary advancements in knowledge, science and technology have resulted in drastic adjustments.

The decline in industrial occupations has largely been counterbalanced by growth in information/knowledge occupations. Thirty years ago only 17 percent of the people were so employed. The figure now is estimated at 58 percent and predicted to rise to 85 percent.

These forecasts are based upon industrialization of developing countries, where manpower can be hired for less money than where higher standards of living prevail. John Naisbitt, publisher of "The Trend Report," says that by the year 2000 as much as 30 percent of the world's manufacturing will be done in the Third World.

Naisbitt also predicts a restructuring of our national economy to become an integral part of a global economy, and decentralization of political power from Washington to states and communities.

From his research Naisbitt identifies California, Florida, Colorado, Washington and Connecticut as "trend-setting states," where "megatrends" are initiated.

In the midst of this alleged trend toward an "Information Society" we are told that a class of people has developed who may have less of it than they are capable of possessing. They are referred to as aliterates, because they can read but seldom utilize this skill. They differ from functional illiterates, who don't know how to read. Just how such people may participate in the movement toward an Information Society isn't clear.

If it is true that knowledge is to be the major source of the future it may be as important to accumulate it as it has been to save money in the past.

Those who fail to do so may experience a new kind of poverty.