

There is a growing recognition that when people are required to retire they do not automatically find the experience easy and enjoyable. Many are said to dread the day and find that enforced leisure "hangs heavy" and leads to acute depression, unhappiness and sometimes even to early death. As society has moved from one in which few retired until wealth or ill health intervened, to one with the generally accepted principle of compulsory retirement at a certain age, the subject has engaged the attention of all sorts of sociologists and experts in the science of gerontology and geriatrics. There is much literature on the subject and in some countries, including Britain and the United States and to a lesser extent in Canada, a growing number of organizations, universities, municipal, governmental, service, have sections devoted to helping retired people or those about to retire. While authorities give different weight to each of the problems, most agree to the general difficulties that retired people face, and all underscore the need for planned preparations for retirement well before the inevitable date. Moreover, all stress the fact that, if properly handled, retirement can mean the start of a new career that may be, perhaps should be, unrelated to one's previous activities. But, being divorced from the pressures of competition, perhaps even from "making a living", this third and final career should be one of great satisfaction - but it should be planned in advance, the further back the better, if it is to provide the happiness and satisfaction to which a lifetime of "work" entitles one.

How far back this planning should start is subject to debate, but it is the factor that should govern the time when "management" starts to alert its employees to the problems they must inevitably face when they reach the compulsory retirement age. There is no uniform practice in private industry in Canada and the United States, but the previous section shows that more and more of the larger corporations are introducing planned retirement counselling systems somewhere along the line. This counselling consists principally of providing full information on company pensions and other financial assets, drawing attention to