

A number of companies are now sponsoring courses in company time, at which doctors, financial advisers, psychologists, educationalists and so on, look at the situation which retired men will have to face. The quality of these courses varies; some take place too near to the retirement date to allow men a real opportunity to get their finances in better order or to prepare for new activities effectively before they actually retire. Some seem to consist of little more than a weekly series of lectures given by "experts" followed by a formal question period in which the same three or four more vocal members of the course ask questions while the others stay silent. Not enough seem to take place with groups small enough to allow a full and frank discussion involving everyone. Part of the problem for many course organizers is that the pre-retirement course is on a low financial priority. The company has to pay the same fee whether eight are in the group or 28; it is easier to book the lecture room once than on two or three occasions. So courses in fact tend to contain 28 more frequently than eight; I have known them to contain as many as 40.

The possibility of "planned retirement" is one that some companies have begun to explore.

In London, two companies at least have appointed retirement officers to advise employees on the problems of retirement and to maintain a link with their retired workers.

We do not yet know how effective pre-retirement courses really are in changing attitudes and initiating new patterns of behaviour.

In Chapter 12 of "Solving the Problems of Retirement", Miss Lorna Hubbard, the Secretary of the Pre-retirement Association gives a run down of the work being done by the various municipal and county authorities that are listed in that Association's literature. It would seem from this listing that many companies in Britain rely on these associations to provide the courses. In most cases, management gives time off without loss of pay and pays the per capita charges. Sometimes the courses are organized in-plant during the working day and sometimes in the evening. Some of these associations also run post-retirement craft or hobby courses and a few courses for personnel or welfare officers. As there are 26 of such organizations listed from right across England and Scotland, it would seem that pre-retirement training may be becoming generally accepted.