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A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I wish to thank you for your kind invitation to submit a short paper for the June issue of the *Canadian Counsellor* which will feature articles on what counsellors possibly will be doing in the future.

This is an excellent idea and I hope that a good response ensues. Personal service practitioners certainly should possess a "psychological set" that includes a strong orientation towards the future. Without this kind of leaning, the setting of personal, professional, and organizational goals may not be undertaken, and if undertaken may be superficial and indeed meaningless.

The planning concept of "management by objectives" is being operationalized more than ever in the business sector and a number of governments, notably Ontario, are pursuing goals with the approach that is termed "Planning, Programme, Budgeting and Systems," PPBS. New planning strategies therefore have emerged to try to deal with the rapidly changing and complex environments that seem to abound everywhere on the contemporary Canadian scene. It goes without saying that such environments are heavily fraught with uncertainty and forces that threaten to undermine the basic human values that lie at the ethical core of the helping professions. Planning in the professional community aimed at maximizing human well-being, however, is not as highly developed as planning that focuses on the purely economic pursuits of maximizing profits.

In this context I want to let you know how pleased I was to receive your invitation and I do hope that a worthwhile June edition emerges. Through opportunities like this an impetus is provided for planning the maximization of those intangible aspirations that all healthy people everywhere have — namely the longing that lies within for personal security, harmonious inter-personal relations, spiritual meaning, self-actualization and so forth.

In 1982 we are likely to see a large scale adaptation of computer technology in centralized income maintenance programmes where computers will determine eligibility, calculate amounts payable and send out cheques on the basis of telephone inputs from social work technicians in the field. Social work technicians or social work aides will be utilized more extensively in team arrangements as social workers concentrate more on family counselling, community development, and work with groups of consumers of services.

Consumerism will flourish in the 1980's and beyond. Applied systems theory will require that the ecological interrelatedness of service patterns be recognized and handled. Client sub-systems that consume the productive outputs of the agencies that will comprise the social-service industry in the future will possess a kind of sovereignty

heretofore unknown. Client groups will operate from an integrated position that began to coalesce in the early 1970's when "client power" first became a force to be reckoned with — arising as it did from the very serious unemployment, inflationary, and other socioeconomic problems afflicting millions of people in Canada. The throngs of young intellectuals who experienced economic hardship, disenchantment or normlessness a decade earlier will tire of experimenting with different life styles and very possibly form an integral part of the power base on which the new consumerism will rest.

Consumers may develop cooperative arrangements and themselves employ innovative, creative social workers in self-help service delivery systems. In this way some kind of a integrating bridge may start to be built between establishmentarian, status quo agencies and their clienteles. During the 1980's social workers are likely to find themselves being required to operate as generalists on system boundaries. They will be heavily involved in inter-professional spheres of activity, in mediating roles between labour and management, between elected representatives and their constituents, and between big business and the vociferous social environments to which they at last will be forced to adapt.

Indeed, 1982 will be a fascinating point in time and will see us launched into a decade that hopefully will be as humanistically civilized as it is technologically advanced.

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VOCATIONAL COUNSELLING 1984 AND BEYOND

By 1984 the State will have moved back into the bedrooms of the people and into the living rooms and workshops too. As machines gradually take over much of the toil done now by humans, humans will be displaced from many occupations into a jobless market. The State will be forced to provide organized activity for people as well as economic sustenance. Activities that are now considered recreational and pleasurable will be controlled by government officials and administered through leisure centers.

Thus, there is little point in talking about vocational counselling as we know it today. To predict that computers will have replaced humans in this area of expertise is to be unoriginal. For not only will computers have replaced counsellors, but also most people, in occupations that can be programmed on a decision-making flow chart. For example, medical diagnosis will be computerized and after a person is probed and measured by a technician and his machine, the com-