A Look Ahead Is MSU Project

The family breadwinners of the future will probably have easier jobs, more leisure time and more money to spend.

This somewhat rosy picture of the future was painted by Michigan State University scientists involved in Project '80, a futuristic look at Michigan's rural potential for 1980. But the gaze into the future also included general projections for all of the economy. Here are a few of these glimpses of the future as seen by the MSU scientists:

The national economy will likely total about a trillion dollars, in terms of today's prices —enough to provide the population with an income after taxes of $3,000 per capita. And this means that every man, woman and child in the country will have nearly $1,000 more to spend than he or she has now. Since most people will have provided themselves with the basic necessities, additional spending will go for luxury goods and nonessentials.

Of the additional $1,000 in disposable income, only about $100 will be spent on food. Most of this will go for processing and for other marketing services rather than the farmer. But, of course, the rising population will enlarge the farmer's gross income.

People will have more leisure time to spend this money. Most will be on a four-day work-week and will also enjoy another week of paid vacation time. More will retire at earlier ages.

There will be more women in the labor force, and families will take advantage of an improved technology and more convenience foods. But the working man and women of the future will expend less energy in their jobs. A higher proportion will be at desk jobs rather than on production lines which will likely reduce the amount of calories needed for each worker to perform these duties.

The total population will be around 245 million by 1980. Michigan should have around 10.2 million.

And there will be striking population shifts off the farm. Looking back to 1960, there were about 441,000 people — making up 5.6 per cent of Michigan's population—that were considered in the "rural farm" category in 1960. This compared with 21 per cent rural nonfarm and 73 per cent urban.

By 1980, only two per cent of the state's population is expected to be classified as rural farm. Rural nonfarm will jump to 23 per cent; urban to 75 per cent.

Along with shifts in population will come shifts in land usage. About 30 per cent of the land that was in farms in 1959 will be diverted to other uses by 1980. Some of this acreage will be used for urban purposes and for highways. The bulk of the disappearing farm area, however, will shift to the forest and recreation classification.

Farm numbers in 1980 will probably drop to 55,000 from 112,000 in 1959. Most of the decline will be in farms grossing less than $10,000. Farms grossing over $20,000 will more than double.

Even so, there will still be a place for the small sized farm and the part-time farm. By 1980, a third of the commercial farmers will still be grossing under $10,000 and about four out of 10 of all farmers will be in the part-time or part-retirement classification.

These estimates of the status of 1980 Michigan are projections, not predictions. They are based upon analyses, assumptions and judgments. The MSU scientists say, many things, including the reaction of people in rural Michigan to Project '80 itself, could change the projections.

The two-year Project '80 research has now been completed and is being turned over to Michigan's rural leaders and industries for their consideration and use. They will examine the projections and determine what can be done—and what should be done — to make rural Michigan what they want it to be in the future.

Money could do more for folks if they expected it to do less.

Banker Explains Kitchen Planning

"A new paint job or a trip to the local department store is often all that's needed to redo the living room. But kitchen remodeling — well, that takes planning."

The man who says this ought to know. Robert W. Stober is assistant vice president of the Dime Savings Bank of Brooklyn, which for the past 18 years has housed a unique home and remodeling display.

Every month, about 5,000 people — many of them out-of-staters—visit the bank's home buyers' exhibition to see what's new in home design, building products and remodeling. The prime interest of men and women alike seems to be the kitchen displays.

"Built-in kitchen appliances are the going thing," says Stober "both as new home features and in remodeling. It's what the public wants, so that's what builders are offering."

An indication of the consumers' demand for built-in kitchen convenience, he says, is the fact that a majority of builders displaying at the bank now offer built-in automatic dishwashers as standard kitchen equipment.

The bank's home buyer's consultant, Mrs. Letty Patti, agrees. A consistent question among women visitors to the exhibit is whether the homes include a dishwasher. "They've come to expect it in homes of all price levels," she says.

Of the exhibit's two types of visitors — young marrieds and families shopping for a second or third home—interest in dishwashers is somewhat high among the second group. Stober thinks he knows why.

"It happened in my own family," he says. "Our old house didn't have a dishwasher, but our new house did. And, at first, my wife was not very enthusiastic about this added attraction.

She had the idea that prerinsing was required and loading would take as much time and trouble as washing dishes by hand.

Then after she'd used the new dishwasher for a while, she couldn't understand how she'd ever gotten along without one!"

He considers it a matter of awareness. Once homeowners learn that an appliance or a building product is worth having, they insist on having it in their new or updated homes.

Showing what it worthwhile is a major purpose of the exhibit. Strictly an advisory service to present and potential homeowners, the exhibits offers no endorsement of any products or building firms.

It is, however, selective of quality products and changes the displays every six months to give visitors the widest scope possible.

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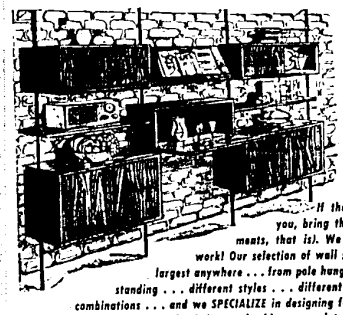

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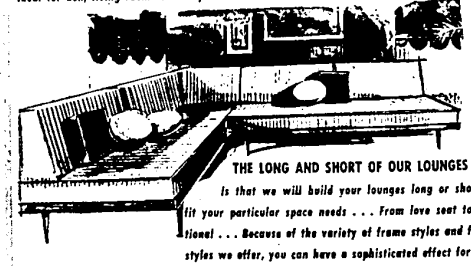

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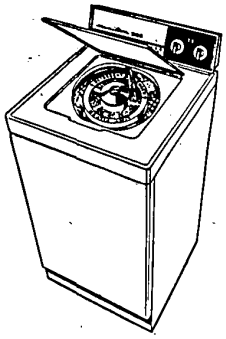

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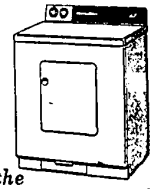

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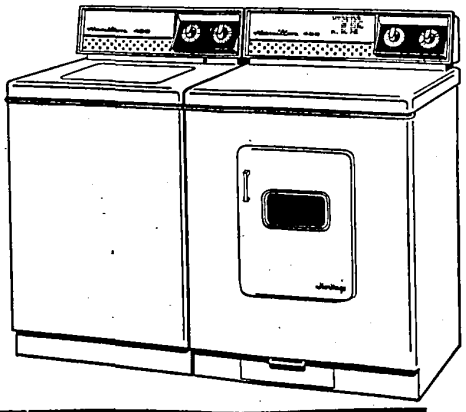

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