1957

Your Push-Button Future

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PROJECT YOURSELF into the 1980's. Material comforts surround you at every turn. Spare time has multiplied; opportunities for travel and recreation have become bountiful. Good health and longer life are almost everyone's to enjoy. You have more money to spend and more things to spend it on.

What will it actually be like, living in the amazing 80's? Let's listen to some people who might know — the scientists, sociologists and statisticians, the industrialists, the educators, and the government officials.

In 1982, this country will be a land of the young. Better than three out of four people will be under 45. The old folks will be healthier, more active, and longer-living than their grandparents. The birth rate may slump a little, but by the late 70's, new babies will be arriving in tremendous numbers.

Women will outnumber men by 3,500,000. There isn't any cause for alarm, however, because your daughters at the peak marriage age, 20 to 24 years, will be out numbered by men 10,350,000 to 9,950,000.

A NEW KIND OF HOUSE is planned for you. It will be round instead of square and will bring nature inside. The building materials will be plastic, aluminum, steel, and glass. Partitions will be movable and rooms detachable. If you get tired of one wall color, you can simply replace that wall with one of another color.

You'll greet the morning in a round bedroom. If it's summer, you will use a blanket for (yes, you guessed it) keeping cool. In winter you won't use a blanket because a dome over the bed will emit warming rays. To get the right shower temperature, you'll just push a button. Thanks to atomic sterilization, your egg and bacon will be as fresh as ever, even though they've been kept around the house for weeks.

TECHNICAL WONDERS planned for the future include a luminous ceiling so that by pushing a button the lighting can be altered to suit your mood. Windows, operated by push buttons, of course, will automatically close when rain hits them. TV screens will hang like a picture on the wall and will be as large as you like. They will provide valuable services like baby-watching, house intercommunication, and, of course, entertainment. Almost every program will be in color. If you slip in the bathroom, not even your dignity will be hurt, because the floors and walls will be made of foam plastic.

You won't sing the dishwashing blues anymore either. A whisk of air and presto! — dishes are washed and even the laundry is done?

EXOTIC FOOD FROM the tropics will be supplied for your table as fresh as the day they were picked or processed. Irradiation will be an important means of preservation. Fruits and vegetables will still be the big diet items, and we will be even more calorie conscious. No refrigeration will be required because of new preservation processes. Unfortunately, this eliminates a national pastime — raiding the ice box.

YOU MAY GET PUSH-BUTTON paralysis. You will push a button to cook, to raise or lower shelves, to get a recipe, to draw the coffee or cocktails and to get rid of wastes. An automatic server will bring the food to the table, return the dirty dishes to the dishwasher. The ultimate will be reached when you can insert a coded card, push a button, and — like magic — the food for the meal will be prepared.

HOUSECLEANING will be a snap! No dust will settle, and the house will stay shiny because of electrostatic dust-gatherers. Self-operating polishers, vacuum cleaners, and floor scrubbers will do the dirty work.

SHOPPING will be done by merely lifting a finger. Suppose you want to buy a new lamp. All you will do is call the store and ask for the lamp department; quickly the lamps are flashed on the TV screen in 3-dimensional effect and in color; a voice gives a complete description; if you like one, you can order it.

No matter how you feel about this picture of the 1980 home you cannot deny the reality of our country's amazing growth. You will be living in a bigger, more powerful country. The questions of war and prosperity will dominate the next quarter century as they have the past. The ultimate fate of each of us will depend on the answers.