So if the world seems like it's crumbling
And things are bad as they can be
Just say you're lucky, just say you're lucky
And you will be lucky just like me

...thus reads one of the songs that American youth is singing these days. A creeping fear is befalling us that we are unable to solve the problems of our age, that our civilization is doomed, that it will run its course to its bitter Spenglerian end. No wonder that many souls recoil from any attempt to lift the veil that hides the future lest they behold Medusa's face. Better than the certainty of doom and death - so it is felt - is the chiarooscuro of doubt and hope, of disappointment and illusion. Still there is a fear of calling even such an ambivalent feeling into consciousness. After all, the future has always been man's greatest storehouse of illusions... "The more ways a man is deluded, the happier he is", sage Erasmus had his Folly say some four hundred years ago. Why then should man profane his secret hope at a time when the gods are everything but propitious? And what is the use of knowing the future if it cannot be implemented by action?

Action is the watchword of many of those who take a special interest in the future. Inspite of all defeats and disappointments, Fascists and Communists alike continue to assert to themselves and to the world that the future belongs to them and that they are the saviors of civilization. Impatient with the present and scornful of the past, they seize upon the future to remould the historical heritage nearer to their heart's desire. To them the future is not what objective scholarship shows will most likely occur, not what an impartial observer sees evolving out of the past and the present, but rather what they assume the future will have to be - a thing so fluid and indeterminate that it will be shaped by their word and deed.

If the study of the future is to have scientific validity, however, it will have to be approached in a more disinterested spirit so as to appeal to more moderate groups. These, however, will also be blocked from the acceptance of Futurology by their less obvious special interests. More probably than not the defenders of old-fashioned capitalism and "rugged individualism" will have little more use for Futurology than the extremists. To conservatives the future is unproblematic since it is expected to equal the present or, better still, the recent past. Should their hopes be disappointed, they would the more resist any attempt to interfere with their enjoyment of the present. Likewise, the most pedestrian middle-of-the-roaders are unlikely to welcome the new science.

Thus Futurology should recruit its adherents from among the progressive advocates of peaceful social change. Though even some of them might recoil from a venture which might bring disillusionment, a goodly