

On the Environmental Crisis and Individualism

Ted Kaczynski

444 Madison Ave.
New York, N.Y 10023

[CROSSED OUT: "Perhaps the worst thing that ever happened to individualism"]

One of your articles on the environmental crisis (*Needed: a Rebirth of Community*, January 26, p.47) seems to [CROSSED OUT] put the blame for this crisis in part on individualism. Perhaps the worst thing that ever happened to individualism was [CROSSED OUT: "to being used as"] to be used as an excuse for the misdeeds of vast corporations — which [CROSSED OUT] are actually little socialist states with a state. [CROSSED OUT] A real individualist would never aim for a career as a corporate executive or a government official, because success in such a career demands conformity and team-playing: The blame for environmental deterioration lies not with any individual or with any collection of independent individuals, but with vast organizations — [CROSSED OUT] governments, corporations, etc. — which make helpless pawns of individuals. If people had been more individualistic for the sake of expediency, we never would have been pushed into our present [CROSSED OUT] over-technologized mess.

To me, it seems only slightly encouraging that some physicists are becoming concerned about moral issues in the applications of science (Insight, Jan. 26). The fact is that they are still dedicated to the advancement of physics. Even if it is used only for "good" ends, scientific progress makes possible, and indeed encourages, [ADDED LATER: "the"] increasing centralization and over-organization of society. Thus individuals gradually become reduced to the status of gears in a machine. [CROSSED OUT] When scientists use science for "good" they are giving [CROSSED OUT: "kind", "gentle"] gentle treatment to the gears in the machine, but the gears are still just gears. I consider the question of whether the gears are well or poorly treated to be of secondary importance. I don't want to be a gear in a machine at all. I don't want to be taken care of by science or society. I want to make [ADDED LATER: "for myself"] the decisions that affect my own [CROSSED OUT] life [CROSSED OUT: "myself"], rather than having society make them for me. This is possible only in a comparatively loosely organized decentralized society.

I quote Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World Revisited*, Chapter III:

"[CROSSED OUT: "We see, then, that] Modern technology has led to the concentration of economic and political power, and to the development of a society controlled ([CROSSED OUT] ruthlessly in the totalitarian states, politely and inconspicuously in the democracies) by Big Business and Big Government." 218

There seems to be an almost religious conviction among intellectuals that science is good because science is knowledge, and knowledge is always good. But let us remember that knowledge is a form of power; and we ought to have realized by now that too much power in [ILLEGIBLE, THEN CROSSED OUT: "anybody's"] hands [CROSSED OUT] is not good.

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T-135

Perhaps the ~~worst~~ thing that ever happened to individualism

One of your articles on the environmental crisis (Needed: a Rebirth of Community, January 26, p. 47) seems to put the blame for this crisis in part on individualism. Perhaps the worst thing that ever happened to individualism was ~~to be used~~ to be used as an excuse for the misdeeds of vast corporations - which, ~~and which~~ ~~are actually~~ are actually little socialist states within a state. A real individualist would never aim for a career as a corporate executive or a government official, because success in such a career demands conformity and team-playing. The blame for environmental deterioration lies not with any individual or with any collection of independent individuals, but with vast organizations - ~~and~~ governments, corporations, etc. - which make helpless pawns of individuals. If people had been more individualistic and less willing to sacrifice their personal autonomy for the sake of expediency, we never would have been pushed into our present ~~own~~ own-technologized mess.

To me, it seems only slightly encouraging that some physicists are becoming concerned about moral issues in the applications of science (Insight, Jan. 26). The fact is that they are still dedicated to the advancement of physics. Even if it is used only for "good" ends, scientific progress makes possible and indeed encourages, the increasing centralization and over-organization of society. Thus individuals gradually become reduced to the status of gears in a machine. ~~When scientists use science for "good" they~~

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The Ted K Archive

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T-Documents: Letter from T. Kaczynski to unknown recipient T-135.
<<https://harbor.klnpa.org/california/islandora/object/cali%3A961>> [now dead]
In an apparant letter to an editor, Madison Ave., New York, NY, Ted says vast corporations are “actually little socialist states within a state.” Ted blames enviornmental problems not on the individual, but corporations, govt., and vast organizations. Ted relates that we are in an “over technological mess” due to people giving up their “personal autonomy for the sake of expediency.”

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