

Loyalty to the System Versus Loyalty to Traditional Social Groups

Some Examples Relevant to Paragraphs 51 & 52 of ISAIF

Ted Kaczynski

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A group of Argentine scholars, in discussing the obstacles that had hindered modernization and economic development in Argentina and in Latin America generally, included among those obstacles a “localist spirit,” prevailing in rural Argentina during the early 19th century, that was “identified with the most restricted little community and incapable of extending its loyalty to the great national community in the modern sense... ;” as well as the fact that in 20th-century Latin America “personal ties and local factors” carried far more weight than political ideologies.¹ They also indicated the problems resulting from the fact that loyalties within certain dominant groups of families were stronger than any loyalty to political principles or to the country as a whole.²

Empire-builders such as the Assyrians and the Incas, and totalitarians like Stalin, have taken calculated measures to break down the solidarity of ethnic groups through mass deportations³ or by other means.⁴ Capitalists have intentionally intermingled different ethnic groups for the purpose of breaking down working-class solidarity.⁵ In the West since WWII the “integration” of ethnic minorities, initially undertaken for humanitarian reasons, is one of the means by which democratic systems have wittingly or unwittingly acted against ethnic solidarity. Totalitarian systems use crude methods to break down the internal loyalty of such groups as families and labor unions and transform them into tools for securing the individual’s loyalty to the system as a whole.⁶ Modern democratic systems use subtler means, perhaps not calculatedly, to the same end.

In ancient Athens, “Solon’s social legislation seems [to have been] generally designed to reduce the primacy of the family and increase that of the community, or polis. To that extent it can be regarded as embryonically democratic.”⁷ The medieval Catholic Church took measures that broke down extended families and kin groups, thus increasing the authority of the Church—though it’s not clear to what extent this was done calculatedly. The result in any case was that in northwestern Europe family loyalty beyond the nuclear family was greatly weakened well before the onset of the Industrial Revolution.⁸ On the other hand, in China until quite recent times, loyalty to the family was far stronger than any loyalty to the country as a whole,⁹ and this may have been one of the reasons why northwestern Europe underwent an Industrial Revolution while China did not, even though China was ahead of Europe in technology at least until the

¹ Tella, Germani, Graciarena et al., pp. 212-13, 265.

² Ibid., p. 266n 15. This note is quoted in Kaczynski, *Anti Tech Revolution*, Chapt. Three, Part III, in the discussion of Rule (ii).

³ Assyrians: NEB (2003), Vol. 23, “Mesopotamia, History of Ancient,” pp. 879, 884. Incas: Ibid., Vol. 26, “Pre-Columbian Civilizations,” p. 39. Stalin regime: Ulam, pp. 574n55, 595.

⁴ Stalin regime: Ulam, pp. 220-21, 649-650.

⁵ Patterson, pp. 27-28.

⁶ E.g., Ulam, pp. 315, 345; Fischer, pp. 226, 228-29.

⁷ NEB (2003), Vol. 20, “Greek and Roman Civilizations,” p. 229.

⁸ Ibid., Vol. 19, “Family and Kinship,” p. 61.

⁹ Hoffer, § 31, citing Hubbard, p. 170. See also Ebrey, p. 59.

end of the Middle Ages. Some of the early-20th-century Chinese thinkers who were concerned with the modernization of China recognized the necessity, for their purposes, of breaking down traditional social groups such as the family.¹⁰ Compare Rostow's view that, in order for an economic "take-off" (i.e., an industrial revolution¹¹ to occur, people "must come to be valued... not for their connexion with clan or class, or, even, their guild; but for their individual ability to perform certain specific, increasingly specialized functions."¹²

¹⁰ Tan, pp. 125, 297.

¹¹ See Rostow, p. 57 ("The take-off is defined as an industrial revolution...").

¹² Ibid., p. 19. See also p. 140 ("oriented... to standards of efficient performance, rather than to graft and to ties of family, clan, or region").

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