Notes on his book Technological Slavery

Ted Kaczynski

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Forward to the 1st Edition by Xenia (Oct 20 2008)

I have to begin by saying that I am deeply dissatisfied with this book. It should have been an organized and systematic exposition of a series of related ideas. Instead, it is an unorganized collection of writings that expound the ideas unsystematically. And some ideas that I consider important are not even mentioned. I simply have not had the time to organize, rewrite, and complete the contents of this book.

The principal reason why I have not had time is that agencies of the United States government have created unnecessary legal difficulties for me. To mention only the most important of these difficulties, the United States Attorney for the Eastern District of California has formally proposed to round up and confiscate the original and every copy of everything I have ever written and turn over all such papers to my alleged "victims" through a fictitious sale that will allow the "victims" to acquire all of the papers without having to pay anything for them. Under this plan the government would even confiscate papers that I have given to libraries, including papers that have been on library shelves for several years. The documents in which the United States Attorney has put forward this proposal are available to the public: They are Document 704 and Document 713, Case Number CR-S-96-259 GEB, United States District Court for the Eastern District of California.

At this writing (March 21, 2007), I have the assistance of lawyers in resisting the government's actions in regard to my papers. But I have learned from hard experience that it is unwise to leave everything in the hands of lawyers; one is well advised to research the legal issues oneself, keep track of what the lawyers are doing, and intervene when necessary. Such work is time-consuming, especially when one is confined in a maximum-security prison and therefore has only very limited access to law books.

I would have preferred to delay publication of the present book until I'd had time to prepare its contents properly, but it seemed advisable to publish before the government took action to confiscate all my papers. I have, moreover, another reason to avoid delay: The Federal Bureau of Prisons has proposed new regulations that would allow prison wardens to cut off almost all communications between allegedly "terrorist" prisoners and the outside world. The proposed regulations are published in the Federal Register, Volume 71, Number 63, pages 16520–25.

I have no idea when the new regulations may be approved, but if and when that happens it is all too possible that my communications will be cut off. Obviously it is

important for me to publish while I can still communicate relatively freely, and that is why this book has to appear now in an unfinished state.

The version of "Industrial Society and Its Future" that appears in this book differs from the original manuscript only in trivial ways; spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and the like have been corrected or improved here and there. As far as I know, all earlier versions of "Industrial Society and Its Future" published in English or French contain numerous errors, such as the omission of parts of sentences and even of whole sentences, and some of these errors are serious enough so that they change or obscure the meaning of an entire paragraph. What is much more serious is that at least one completely spurious article has been published under my name. I recently received word from a correspondent in Spain that an article titled "La Rehabilitación del Estado por los Izquierdistas" ("The Rehabilitation of the State by the Leftists") had been published and attributed to me. But I most certainly did not write such an article. So the reader should not assume that everything published under my name has actually been written by me. Needless to say, all writings attributed to me in the present book are authentic.

I would like to thank Dr. David Skrbina for having asked questions and raised arguments that spurred me to formulate and write down certain ideas that I had been incubating for years. I owe thanks to a number of other people also. At the end of "The Truth About Primitive Life" I have thanked by name (and with their permission) several people who provided me with materials for that essay, and some of those people have helped me enormously in other ways as well. In particular, I owe a heavy debt of gratitude to F.B. and to Patrick S. I owe special thanks to my Spanish correspondent who writes under the pseudonym "Último Reducto"[1] and to a female friend of his, both of whom provided stimulating argument; and Último Reducto moreover has ably translated many of my writings into Spanish. I hesitate to name others to whom I owe thanks, because I'm not sure that they would want to be named publicly.

For the sake of clarity, I want to state here in summary form the four main points that I've tried to make in my writings.

1. Technological progress is carrying us to inevitable disaster. There may be physical disaster (for example, some form of environmental catastrophe), or there may be disaster in terms of human dignity (reduction of the human race to a degraded and servile condition). But disaster of one kind or another will certainly result from continued technological progress. This is not an eccentric opinion. Among those frightened by the probable consequences of technological progress are Bill Joy, whose article "Why the Future Doesn't Need Us" is now famous, Martin Rees, author of the book Our Final Hour, and Richard A. Posner, author of Catastrophe: Risk and Response.[2] None of these three is by any stretch of the imagination radical or predisposed to find fault with the existing structure of society. Richard Posner is a conservative judge of

[1] Último Reducto has no connection with the Mexican fascist group that, coincidentally, has adopted the same name.

[2] For information on these three works, see our List of Works Cited.

the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit. Bill Joy is a well-known computer wizard, and Martin Rees is the Astronomer Royal of Britain. These last two men, having devoted their lives to technology, would hardly be likely to fear it without having good reason to do so. Joy, Rees, and Posner are concerned mainly with physical disaster and with the possibility or indeed the likelihood that human beings will be supplanted by machines. The disaster that technological progress implies for human dignity has been discussed by men like Jacques Ellul and Lewis Mumford, whose books are widely read and respected. Neither man is considered to be out on the fringe or even close to it.

2. Only the collapse of modern technological civilization can avert disaster. Of course, the collapse of technological civilization will itself bring disaster. But the longer the technoindustrial system continues to expand, the worse will be the eventual disaster. A lesser disaster now will avert a greater one later. The development of the technoindustrial system cannot be controlled, restrained, or guided, nor can its effects be moderated to any substantial degree. This, again, is not an eccentric opinion. Many writers, beginning with Karl Marx, have noted the fundamental importance of technology in determining the course of society's development. In effect, they have recognized that it is technology that rules society, not the other way around. Ellul especially has emphasized the autonomy of technology, i.e., the fact that modern technology has taken on a life of its own and is not subject to human control. Ellul, moreover, was not the first to formulate this conclusion. Already in 1934 the Mexican thinker Samuel Ramos[3] clearly stated the principle of technological autonomy, and this insight was adumbrated as early as the 1860s by Samuel Butler.[4] Of course, no one questions the obvious fact that human individuals or groups can control technology in the sense that at a given point in time they can decide what to do with a particular item of technology. What the principle of technological autonomy asserts is that the overall development of technology, and its long-term consequences for society, are not subject to human control. Hence, as long as modern technology continues to exist, there is little we can do to moderate its effects. A corollary is that nothing short of the collapse of technological society can avert a greater disaster. Thus, if we want to defend ourselves against technology, the only action we can take that might prove effective is an effort to precipitate the collapse of technological society. Though this conclusion is an obvious consequence of the principle of technological autonomy, and though it possibly is implied by certain statements of Ellul, I know of no conventionally published writer who has explicitly recognized that our only way out is through the collapse of technological society. This seeming blindness to the obvious can only be explained as the result of timidity. If we want to precipitate the collapse of technological society, then our goal is a revolutionary one under any reasonable definition of that term. What we are faced with, therefore, is a need for out-and-out revolution.

[3] Ramos, pp. 104–05.

[4] Jones, p. 46.

3. The political left is technological society's first line of defense against revolution. In fact, the left today serves as a kind of fire extinguisher that douses and quenches any nascent revolutionary movement. What do I mean by "the left"? If you think that racism, sexism, gay rights, animal rights, indigenous people's rights, and "social justice" in general are among the most important issues that the world currently faces, then you are a leftist as I use that term. If you don't like this application of the word "leftist," then you are free to designate the people I'm referring to by some other term. But, whatever you call them, the people who extinguish revolutionary movements are the people who are drawn indiscriminately to causes: racism, sexism, gay rights, animal rights, the environment, poverty, sweatshops, neocolonialism... it's all the same to them. These people constitute a subculture that has been labeled "the adversary culture."[5] Whenever a movement of resistance begins to emerge, these leftists (or whatever you choose to call them) come swarming to it like flies to honey until they outnumber the original members of the movement, take it over, and turn it into just another leftist faction, thereby emasculating it. The history of "Earth First!" provides an elegant example of this process.[6]

4. What is needed is a new revolutionary movement, dedicated to the elimination of technological society, that will take measures to exclude all leftists, as well as the assorted neurotics, lazies, incompetents, charlatans, and persons deficient in self-control who are drawn to resistance movements in America today. Just what form a revolutionary movement should take remains open to discussion. What is clear is that, for a start, people who are serious about addressing the problem of technology must establish systematic contact with one another and a sense of common purpose; they must strictly separate themselves from the "adversary culture"; they must be oriented toward practical action; and they must take as their goal nothing less than the dissolution of technological civilization.

[5] See Hollander as referenced in our List of Works Cited.

[6] The process is ably documented by M.F. Lee (see List of Works Cited).

Note on the 1st Edition (Oct 20 2009)

A collection of my writings has been published by Editions Xenia of Vevey, Switzerland; in English under the title The Road to Revolution, and in French under the title L'Effondrement du Système Technologique.[1] The book also contains an afterword (which appears as a prologue in the French version) by Dr. Patrick Barriot, as well as an afterword by Dr. David Skrbina. The publisher has presented this volume as "the work of the Unabomber, complete and authorized", but in reality it is neither complete nor authorized by me. The book is not a complete compilation, since it omits some of the writings that I have published; for example, "Ship of Fools"[2], which is probably, after "Industrial Society and Its Future"[3] , the best known of my works. The book has been authorized by me in the sense that I consented to its publication; but I did not authorize all of its content. I did not authorize Dr. Barriot's bibliography or afterword, and portions of my own writings are printed with numerous errors in the book.

The original of the book was prepared by Dr. Barriot from my manuscripts. Over several months, Dr. Barriot sent me drafts of my letters and essays typed by him so that I could correct them. Drafts of it had numerous errors, and I sent him several long lists of corrections. In a note dated February 27, 2008, Dr. Barriot assured me that he would "take into account" all my corrections, but after the publication of the book I was perplexed to discover that Dr. Barriot had simply ignored several of my lists. of corrections and had sent the corresponding drafts to the editor as they were – full of errors. As a result, part of the published book is clouded by errors, some of which are serious enough to change the meaning of the text.

The French version of the book is a translation made by Dr. Barriot. A friend of mine who knows French has been checking the translation, but so far he has only been able to check a small part of the book. Still, he has found some significant errors (most notably the complete omission of paragraph 9 of "Industrial Society and Its Future"), so it is questionable whether the translation accurately reflects my ideas.

I was completely unaware of the content of Dr. Barriot's epilogue before the publication of the book. When the book came out I was stunned to see that part of Dr.

[1] The mentioned edition dates from 2008. N. del t.

[2] There is an edition in Spanish: El Buque de los Necios , Likiniano (no date). It can be read at: http://www.sindominio.net/ecotopia/textos/buque_necios.html . N. of the t.

[3] "The Industrial Society and Its Future". There is an edition in Spanish: The Industrial Society and Its Future , Ediciones Isumatag , 2011. N. of the tea

Barriot's afterword (the top half of page 360) repeated the same leftist ideas that I have always tried to stay away from, and the other part I was linked to the "Red Brigades", the "Red Army Faction", the "Animal Liberation Front" and other extreme leftist groups that I disdain.

It is highly inappropriate that both Dr. Skrbina's afterword and the bibliography the publisher added to the book cite the following works: Alston Chase, Harvard and the Unabomber ; Alston Chase, A Mind for Murder ; J. Douglas, Unabomber: On the Trail of America's Most Wanted Serial Killer ; R. Graysmith, Unabomber: Desire to Kill ; J. Smolove et al., Mad Genius ; Chris Waits and Dave Shors, Unabomber: The Secret Life of Ted Kaczynski . All of these works are to varying degrees irresponsible and/or dishonest. In particular, the Waits and Shors book consists mostly of outright lies.

The complete list of corrections to the edition of The Road to Revolution carried out by Xenia would occupy more than twenty pages. However, here are some of the fixes that seem most important to me:

- Page 27, line 20, where it says "more leftists" it should say "most leftists."
- Page 49, line 9 of Note 16, where it says "standards of 'property'"[4] it should say "standards of property'"[5].
- Page 49, line 18 of Note 16, where it says "physically dependent on" it should say "physically independent of".
- Page 51, line 11, where it says "society of the nation" it should say "society or the nation."
- Page 71, line 1, where it says "ie" it should say "eg".
- Page 80, line 7, where it says "car of his" it should say "car or his".
- Page 94, line 21 starting from the end, where it says "away from everyone" it should say "away everyone".
- Page 122, line 8, where it says "difficulty of pain" it should say "difficulty or pain".
- Page 130, line 15, where it says "ethnic" it should say "ethic".
- Page 251, line 11, where it says "most dependent" it should say "more dependent".
- Page 266, sixth line from the bottom, where it says "usual" it should say "unusual".

[4] "Property", in the sense of "possession", in English. N. of the t.

[5] "Property", in the sense of "the quality of being socially or morally adequate or correct", in English. N. of the t.

- Page 315, line 3, where it says ”that can’t” should say ”that they can”.
- Page 317, seventh and sixth lines from the end, part of a sentence is missing. In these two lines you should put: ”therefore the factories would no longer be able to make things. If the factories were no longer able to make things, then there would be no more replacement parts to keep the TV”.
- Page 321, second line from the bottom, where it says ”promote is” it should say ”promote it is”.
- Page 333, fourth line from the bottom of Note 8, where it says ”pages 80, 158” should say ”pages 90, 158”.

Ted Kaczyński
October 20, 2009

Forward to the 2nd Edition by Feral House (Dec 8 2009)

This book was first published by Editions Xenia under the title *The Road to Revolution*. Unfortunately, the Xenia edition was riddled with errors, most of which were not my fault. In this second edition, if the publisher has done his work properly, the errors have been corrected and the book has been improved in other ways.

I want to make clear that I have no control over the cover design of this book and no control over the way it is advertised and promoted. I expect it to be advertised and promoted in ways that I will find offensive. Moreover, I do not like the new title of the book.

Nevertheless, I have cooperated in the creation of this new edition and consented to the change of title because I think it is important to make the book available in its present corrected and improved form.

Ted Kaczynski December 8, 2009

Forward to the 3rd Edition by Fitch & Madison (Apr 2017)

I. The original Technological Slavery was a miscellaneous collection of letters and articles written at earlier times and hastily thrown together for publication with inadequate editing and proofreading. It was presented in that unfinished and poorly organized form because, in view of new regulations that had been proposed by the Federal Bureau of Prisons under the Bush administration, there appeared to be a danger that my communications with the outside world might be cut off before I could get the book into print. See the Preface to the First and Second Editions, fourth paragraph. Under the Obama administration, however, the proposed regulations were quietly allowed to die, or perhaps were merely forgotten, and my communications with the outside world remained open.

In view of its deficiencies, Technological Slavery should have been thoroughly and completely rewritten so that its ideas could now be presented in a systematic and well-organized form. But the new (as of 2017) administration in Washington seems to be shaping up as a regime of the far right, and it's all too possible that the regulations proposed earlier may be revived or that other, similar ones may be put into effect; so once again I'm faced with a danger that my communications may be cut off. I've therefore had to move quickly in preparing the revised Technological Slavery for publication. This has precluded a complete rewriting, but it has not precluded substantial improvements over the earlier editions. I've decided to divide the revised Technological Slavery into two volumes, in part because, with the new material that is being added, a single volume might have proven somewhat unwieldy, but mainly because in this first volume I can get the most important ideas and arguments into print much more quickly than I could if I waited until all of the materials were ready for publication.

II. The present volume includes Industrial Society and Its Future (ISAIF), "The System's Neatest Trick," and all of the letters[13] that appeared in the second edition of Technological Slavery. Here and there these materials have been modified for the sake of clarity, for stylistic reasons, or to correct errors. The notes have been greatly expanded, again to correct errors, but especially to provide clarification of points made in the text, full citation of sources incompletely cited in the earlier editions, and citation of new sources in support of some of my arguments and assertions. Eight new appendices have been added that provide justification, clarification, or amplification of arguments that appear in the main text. Appendices Three and Five improve upon Afterthoughts 4

and 3, respectively, of the second edition of Technological Slavery.[1] In addition to the foregoing materials, the present volume includes the long and previously unpublished "Letter to Dr. P.B. on the Motivations of Scientists."

As those who have read the Preface to the First and Second Editions (above) know already, ISAIF as it first appeared in the Washington Post was marred by numerous, serious errors of transcription, and subsequent versions, whether published in print or on the Internet, added further errors to those of the Washington Post. The first reasonably accurate version of ISAIF to be published was the one that appeared in the second edition of Technological Slavery. Those who have not read the second edition are therefore advised to read ISAIF as it appears in the present volume, even if they have previously read it elsewhere. Readers should in any case bear in mind that ISAIF was written in 1995 and therefore is in some respects dated. Though I've made some minor changes for stylistic reasons or for clarity, I have not tried to rewrite ISAIF to bring it up to date. Corrections and major clarifications have been relegated to the notes, the number of which has been increased from 36 to 63. Apart from ISAIF, the most important section of this book consists of my letters to David Skrbina. I've modified the text of these to a somewhat greater extent than I have that of ISAIF; even so, corrections, clari- fications, and amplifications have mostly been reserved for the notes and the appendices. Six of the latter, out of eight, are related to my letters to Dr. Skrbina. In Part III of the Preface to my book Anti-Tech Revolution: Why and How (2016), I discussed the fact that I had found it necessary to use many doubtful sources of information; for example, media reports and encyclopedia articles. Everything I said there applies also to my use of doubtful sources in the present work.

III. A number of people have helped me in revising and supple- menting Technological Slavery; only the most important among them will be mentioned here. I owe thanks above all to Susan Gale, who has been far and away my best researcher in this project, as she was in the case of my book Anti-Tech Revolution: Why and How; she has done almost all of the typing and has served as the center around whom the whole project has been organized. After Susan, my most important researchers have been Kwani Chung, T.F., and Elizabeth Tobier. Elizabeth and T.F. have been especially generous in ordering books for me at their own expense; Dr. Susie Meister, T.N., Stephanie Tisza and two persons who prefer not to be named have likewise provided me with books at their own expense. Various people have sent me copies of articles or called my attention to information of which I've made use; among them are Lydia Eccles, Isumatag (pseudonym), Último Reducto (pseudonym), Andrea Speijer- Beek, and Dr. David Skrbina who, among other things, located the source of the Einstein quote comparing technology to an axe in the hand of a pathological criminal (see the Letter to Dr. P.B. on the Motivations of Scientists, Part III). To a correspondent who wishes to remain anonymous I owe special thanks for pointing out an error of mine respecting earth- worms (pages 333 and 369 of the 2010 edition of Technological Slavery). Of

[1] Except a part of the "Excerpts from Letter to M.K."

those who have helped with proofreading, the most important have been Amber M., Lyn Kaminski, and Andrea Speijer-Beek. Dr. Julie Ault has been supportive, while Patrick S. and a gentleman who prefers not to be named have provided indispensable financial support. To all of these people I am warmly grateful.

IV. Note on Referencing. In the notes that follow each section of this book, I generally cite sources of information by giving the author's last name and a page number. The reader can find the author's full name, the title of the book or article cited, the date of publication, and other necessary information by looking up the author's last name in the List of Works Cited that appears at the end of the book. When a source without named author is cited, the reader will in some cases find additional information about the source in the list of works without named author that concludes the List of Works Cited. Two abbreviations are used repeatedly in the notes: "ISAIF" refers to Industrial Society and Its Future, which appears in this volume. "NEB" means The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, Fifteenth Edition. The Fifteenth Edition has been modified repeatedly, so "NEB" is always followed by a date in parentheses that indicates the particular version of NEB that is cited. For example, "NEB (2003)" means the version of The New Encyclopaedia Britannica that bears the copyright date 2003.

Ted Kaczynski
April 2017

Forward to the 4th Edition by Fitch & Madison (Jan 2021)

The present edition of this book incorporates a number of minor improvements as well as five revisions that I consider significant. In descending order of importance:

1. In the Third Edition, Appendix Four—on Domingo Faustino Sarmiento and the gauchos—was far from adequate, because when I wrote it I lacked sufficient information. Since then I've procured two books on gaucho life by Argentinian historians, and I've rewritten Appendix Four accordingly.

2. The new Note 8 to the Extract from Letter to J.N. makes an important point that I have not made explicitly elsewhere.

3. Two of the Further Comments added at the end of ISAIF clarify significant issues.

4. In the Third Edition, the long Note 8 to Appendix Three was in part misguided. Note 8 addressed Prussia's failure to build an overseas empire, and I've written a new Note 8 which—while still tentative— addresses the same question in a way that I hope is less misguided.

5. To Appendix Two I've added a second example in support of my contention that the decisions of individuals can occasionally have an important and long-lasting effect on the course of history.

Ted Kaczynski
January 2021

The Ted K Archive
A critique of his ideas & actions

Ted Kaczynski
Notes on his book Technological Slavery

#1, #2 & #3.

www.thetedkarchive.com