

# Prefaces to the book 'Anti-Tech Revolution'

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# Preface to the First Edition

## I.

There are many people today who see that modern society is heading toward disaster in one form or another, and who moreover recognize technology as the common thread linking the principal dangers that hang over us.<sup>1</sup> Nearly all such people fall into one of two categories:

First, there are those who are appalled at what technology is doing to our society and our planet, but are not motivated to take any action against the technological system because they feel helpless to accomplish anything in that direction. They read an anti-tech book—say, for example, Jacques Ellul’s *Technological Society*—and it makes them feel better because they’ve found someone who has eloquently articulated their own anxieties about technology. But the effect soon wears off and their discomfort with the technological world begins to nag them again, so they turn for relief to another anti-tech book—Ivan Illich, Kirkpatrick Sale, Daniel Quinn, my own *Industrial Society and Its Future*, or something else—and the cycle repeats itself. In other words, for these people anti-tech literature is merely a kind of therapy: It alleviates their discomfort with technology, but it does not serve them as a call to action.

In the second category are people who are appalled at modern technology and actually aspire to accomplish something against the technological system, but have no practical sense of how to go about it. At a purely tactical level some of these people may have excellent practical sense; they may know very well, for example, how to organize a demonstration against some particular atrocity that is being committed against our environment. But when it comes to grand strategy<sup>2</sup> they are at a loss. Most perhaps recognize that any victory against an environmental atrocity or other technology-related evil can only be temporary, at best, as long as the technological

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<sup>1</sup> I’ve received many letters from such people, not only from within the United States but from a score of countries around the world.

<sup>2</sup> “Tactics,” “strategy,” and “grand strategy” are, in origin at least, military terms. Tactics are techniques used for the immediate purpose of winning a particular battle; strategy deals with broader issues and longer intervals of time, and includes advance preparations for winning a battle or a series of battles; grand strategy addresses the entire process of achieving a nation’s objectives through warfare, and takes into account not only the strictly military aspect of the process but also the political, psychological, economic, etc. factors involved. See, e.g., NEB (2003), Vol. 29, “War, Theory and Conduct of,” p. 647. The terms “tactics,” “strategy,” and “grand strategy” are used by analogy in contexts that have nothing to do with warfare or the military.

system remains in existence. But they can think of nothing better to do than to continue attacking particular evils while vaguely hoping that their work will somehow help to solve the overall problem of technology. In reality their work is counterproductive, because it distracts attention from the technological system itself as the underlying source of the evils and leads people to focus instead on problems of limited significance that moreover cannot be permanently solved while the technological system continues to exist.

The purpose of this book is to show people how to begin thinking in practical, grand-strategic terms about what must be done in order to get our society off the road to destruction that it is now on.

On the basis of past experience I feel safe in saying that virtually all people—even people of exceptional intelligence—who merely read this book once or twice at an ordinary pace will miss many of its most important points. This book, therefore, is not a book to be read; it is a book to be studied with the same care that one would use in studying, for example, a textbook of engineering. There is of course a difference between this book and a textbook of engineering. An engineering textbook provides precise rules which, if followed mechanically, will consistently give the expected results. But no such precise and reliable rules are possible in the social sciences. The ideas in this book therefore need to be applied thoughtfully and creatively, not mechanically or rigidly. Intelligent application of the ideas will be greatly facilitated by a broad knowledge of history and some understanding of how societies develop and change.

## II.

This book represents only a part, though the most important part, of a longer work that I hope to publish later. I've been anxious to get the most important part of the work into print as soon as possible, because the growth of technology and the destruction of our environment move at an ever-accelerating rate, and the time to begin organizing for action is—as soon as possible. Moreover, I'm 72 years old, and I could be put out of action at any time by some medical misfortune, so I want to get the most important material into print while I can.

The entire work—the part published here together with the parts that at present exist only in the form of imperfect drafts—goes far beyond my earlier works, *Industrial Society and Its Future* and *Technological Slavery*, and it represents the more-or-less final result of a lifetime of thought and reading—during the last thirty-five years, intensive thought and specifically purposeful reading. The factual basis of the work is drawn primarily from my reading over all those years, and especially from the reading I've done since 1998 while confined in a federal prison. As of 2011, however, there remained important loose ends that needed to be tied up, gaps that needed to be filled in, and I've been able to tie up those loose ends and fill in those gaps only with the generous help of several people outside the prison who have delved for the information

I've requested and have answered almost all of the questions—sometimes very difficult questions—that I've asked them.

My thanks are owing above all to Susan Gale. Susan has played the key role in this project and has been indispensable. She has been my star researcher, producing more results and solving more problems, by far, than anyone else; she has ably coordinated the work of other researchers and has done most of the typing.

After Susan, the most important person in this project has been Dr. Julie Ault. Julie has read drafts of the various chapters and has called my attention to many weak points in the exposition. I've tried to correct these, though I haven't been able to correct all of them to my (or, I assume, her) satisfaction. In addition, Julie has provided valuable advice on manuscript preparation.<sup>3</sup> But most important of all has been the encouragement I've taken from the fact of having an intellectual heavyweight like Julie Ault on my side.

Several people other than Susan have made important research contributions through steady work over a period of time: Brandon Manwell, Deborah, G.G. Gomez, Valerie v.E., and one other person whose name will not be mentioned here. Patrick S. and another person, who prefers not to be named, have provided critically important financial support and have been helpful in other ways as well.

The foregoing are the people who have made major contributions to the project, but I owe thanks also to nine other people whose contributions have been of lesser magnitude: Blake Janssen, Jon H., and Philip R. each dug up several pieces of information for me; Lydia Eccles, Dr. David Skrbina, Isumatag (pseudonym), and Ultimo Reducto (pseudonym) have called my attention to information or sent me copies of articles that I've found useful; Lydia has also performed other services, and an assistant of Dr. Skrbinas typed early drafts of Chapter Three and Appendix Three. On the legal front, I owe thanks to two attorneys for their pro-bono assistance: Nancy J. Flint, who took care of copyright registration, and Edward T Ramey, whose intervention removed a bureaucratic obstacle to the preparation of this book.

My thanks to all!

### III.

Despite the generous help I've received, I've had to make use at many points of sources of information that are of doubtful reliability; for example, media reports (all too often irresponsible!) or encyclopedia articles, which, because of their necessary brevity, commonly give only sketchy accounts of the subjects they cover. None of the individuals named above are in any way responsible for the resulting defects of this book. It is only since 2011 that I've had people who have been willing and able to

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<sup>3</sup> For reasons connected with the need to get the manuscript for the present work prepared quickly, I've disregarded some of Julie Ault's recommendations concerning manuscript preparation. Needless to say, Julie is in no way responsible for any resulting defects that may be found in this book.

spend substantial amounts of time and effort in doing research for me, and all of them have had to carry on simultaneously with other necessary aspects of their lives, such as earning a living. If I had asked them to find solid authority for every piece of information for which I've relied on a questionable source, the completion of this book would have been delayed for a matter of years. I do not believe that my use of questionable sources of information will be found to weaken significantly the arguments or the conclusions that I offer in this book. Even if some of the bits of information I've cited turn out to be false, inaccurate, or misleading, the basic structure of the book will remain sound.

## IV.

Note on referencing. In the notes that follow each chapter or appendix, 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 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 be able to find additional information about the source by consulting 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 my Industrial Society and Its Future, of which only one correct version has been published in English; it appears on pages 36-120 of my book *Technological Slavery* (Feral House, 2010).

"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 May 2014

# Preface to the Second Edition

## I.

This second edition of *Anti-Tech Revolution* closely follows the format of the first edition, but has been improved in a variety of minor ways—as by citation of better authority for some statements of fact and correction of a few errors of fact—and also in four ways that I consider moderately important: 1. In Part III of Chapter One it is argued that the power of revolutionary dictators like Hitler and Stalin was far from truly absolute. In the first edition that argument was weak; at least in regard to Hitler; it has now been greatly strengthened. 2. In Part II of Chapter Three, the discussion of early Christianity was weak because based on insufficient information. Since then I’ve been able to read two excellent books on early Christianity, and I’ve strengthened the discussion accordingly. 3. In Part III of Chapter Three I’ve strengthened somewhat the discussion of Rule (iv) (that a revolutionary movement should strive to exclude unsuitable persons who may seek to join it), which in the first edition was weaker than it is now. 4. Also in Part III of Chapter Three, I’ve brought the discussion of Mexican politics up to date (meaning up to July 2018). In some other—though minor—ways as well the present edition has been brought up to date, but no systematic effort has been made to update every part of the book. The amount of research and other work required would have been prohibitive, and in any case this book is not designed to be a current-events report; its purpose is to elucidate certain general principles, which in most instances can be done just as well with old facts as with fresh ones.

## II.

In Part II of the preface to the first edition I wrote: “This book represents only a part, though the most important part, of a longer work that I hope to publish later.” Since then I’ve decided that the additional material I had hoped to include in the longer work can best be placed in the second volume of the revised edition of my book *Technological Slavery*. In view of my age and the difficult circumstances under which I have to work, it remains an open question whether I will ever be able to complete that second volume.

To some people the present work may seem nihilistic, inasmuch as it focuses on the need to eliminate modern technology but says very little about positive values opposed to those of the technological system.

Elsewhere, however, I've discussed the positive value of wild nature and of a life lived close to nature,<sup>1</sup> and if I live to complete the second volume of *Technological Slavery* it will include a section titled "Is There Such a Thing as Wilderness? Is There Such a Thing as the Balance of Nature?" which should do a great deal to dispel any aura of nihilism that may seem to surround radical opposition to the technological system.

### III.

What was said in Part III of the preface to the first edition concerning my use of doubtful sources of information—for example, media reports—applies equally to this second edition. Moreover, as pointed out in note 102 to Chapter Three, the need for brevity has forced me in some cases to compress my account of historical events to the point of serious oversimplification. For these reasons the present work is not suitable for use as a source-book of facts. Readers who require a high degree of reliability and factual accuracy should consult the sources I've cited, evaluate them, and then conduct further research as needed.

Readers who are familiar with some of the works I've referenced in the notes may wonder why, in some cases, I've cited facts from a given book but failed to cite from the same book other facts that would have been relevant to my arguments. This is explained by the difficult circumstances in which I'm placed. Prisoners here are not allowed to accumulate many books in their cells; consequently I read a book, take notes on it, then send it to friends on the outside. But in taking notes I can't fully anticipate my future needs for information, so I've often failed to record information that I would have found relevant a few years later. A similar problem occurs with books from the prison library; I read them and take notes on them, but in many cases the books subsequently disappear from the library—because they've been damaged or stolen by prisoners, or have simply worn out, or for some other reason.

### IV.

I could not have prepared this second edition of *Anti-Tech Revolution* without the help of several people outside the prison. Susan Gale, above all, has continued to play a central and indispensable role in my writing projects. She is the best and most important researcher, she coordinates the work of other researchers, she is an excellent typist, and she helps in a variety of ways too numerous to mention.

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<sup>1</sup> See mainly: ISAIF, „ 183-84, 197-99. Kaczynski, Letters to David Skrbina: Aug. 29, 2004; Sept. 18, 2004, point (ii); Oct. 12, 2004, Part II; Nov. 23, 2004, Parts III.D&E. In the 2010 Feral House edition of Kaczynski, the Blackfoot Valley Dispatch interviews, pp. 394-407.



Others who have helped with research are Traci J. Macnamara, Elizabeth Tobier, **T.F.**, N.P., and S.T. Elizabeth has been especially generous in ordering books for me at her own expense; Dr. Susie Meister, L.R.F., T.F., C.H., and ST. too have ordered books for me at their own expense, while Lydia Eccles and Manuel Monteiro have sent me valuable articles from periodicals or from the Internet. Patrick S. has provided important financial support. I owe all of these people a debt of gratitude, and I especially want to thank Manuel for having arranged the publication in Europe of the first edition of Anti-Tech Revolution.

## **V.**

The note on referencing that concludes the preface to the first edition applies equally to the present edition. I only need to add that references like “Kaczynski, Letter to David Skrbina (+ date),” “Kaczynski, 'The System's Neatest Trick,'” and so forth, direct the reader to parts of my book Technological Slavery.

Ted Kaczynski October 2018

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