

C-8

throughout this material,
replace the phrase "substitute
activity" by "surrogate activity".

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Introduction

1. In this article we argue that the industrial revolution and its consequences have been a disaster for the human race. They have greatly increased the life-expectancy of those of us who live in "advanced" countries, but they have destabilized society, have made life unfulfilling, have subjected human beings to indignities, have led to widespread psychological suffering (in the Third World, to physical suffering as well) and have inflicted severe damage on the natural world. The continued development of technology will worsen the situation. It will certainly subject human beings to greater indignities and inflict greater damage on the natural world, it will probably lead to greater social disruption and psychological suffering, and it may lead to increased physical suffering even in "advanced" countries.

2. The industrial-technological system may survive or it may break down. If it survives, it may eventually achieve a low level of physical and psychological suffering, but only after passing through a long and very painful period of adjustment and only at the cost of permanently reducing human beings and many other living organisms to engineered products and mere cogs in the social machine. Furthermore, if the system survives, the consequences will be inevitable; there is no way of reforming or modifying the system so as to prevent it from depriving people of dignity and autonomy.

3. If the system breaks down the consequences

will still be very painful. But the bigger the system grows the more disastrous the results of its breakdown will be, so if it is to break down it had best break down sooner rather than later.

4. We therefore ~~propose~~ ^{advocate} a revolution against the industrial system. This revolution may or may not make use of violence; it may be sudden or it may be a relatively gradual process spanning a few decades. We ~~are unable~~ ^{can't} to predict any of that. But we do outline in a very general way the measures that those who hate the industrial system should take in order to prepare the way for a revolution against that form of society. This is not to be a political revolution. Its object will be to overthrow not governments but the economic and technological basis of the present society.

5. In this article we give attention to only some of the negative developments that have grown out of the industrial-technological system. Other such developments we mention only briefly or ignore altogether. This does not mean that we regard these other developments as unimportant. For practical reasons we have to confine our discussion to areas that have received insufficient public attention or in which we have something new to say. For example, since there are well-developed environmental and wilderness movements we have written very little about environmental degradation or the destruction of wild nature, even though we consider these to be highly important.

We by no means claim to be telling the whole truth about leftist psychology.

6. Almost everyone will agree that we live in a deeply troubled society. One of the most widespread manifestations of the craziness of our world is leftism, ~~so as an introduction to our discussion~~ so a discussion of the psychology of leftism can serve as an introduction to the discussion of the problems of modern society in general.

7. But what is leftism? During the first half of the twentieth century leftism ~~it~~ could have been practically identified with socialism, but today the movement is fragmented and it is not clear who can ~~be~~ properly be called a leftist. When we speak of leftists in this article we have in mind mainly socialists, collectivists, "politically correct" types, feminists, gay and disability activists, animal-rights activists and the like. But not everyone who is associated with one of these movements is a leftist. What we are trying to get at in discussing leftism is not ^{so much} a particular movement or ideology ~~but~~ as a psychological type, or rather a collection of related psychological types. Thus, what we mean by ~~leftism~~ "leftism" will emerge more clearly in the course of our discussion of leftist psychology. (Also, see paragraphs 227-230.)

8. Even so, our conception of leftism will remain a good deal less clear than we would wish, but there doesn't seem to be any remedy for this given the complexity and variety of human psychology. All we aspire to do here is to indicate ~~in~~ in a rough and approximate way the two psychological tendencies that we believe are the main driving force of modern leftism. ~~Moreover~~ Our discussion is meant to apply

The Psychology of Modern Leftism

6. We begin by considering the psychology of leftism because our discussion of leftism will set the stage for our discussion of the psychological problems of modern society in general.

7. "Leftism" is a vague term. When we speak of leftists we have in mind especially socialists, collectivists, "politically-correct" types, feminists, gay and disability activists, ~~probably the majority of~~ animal-rights activists. Very likely some radical environmentalists and professed anarchists fit into this group, but we think that a substantial proportion of anarchists and radical environmentalists are of a very different psychological type. Anyway, what we mean by "leftism" will emerge more clearly in the course of our discussion.

8. Social movements are complex and nothing like a complete description of the psychology of their adherents is a practical possibility. Individual leftists are motivated by their own ideals and needs and these vary from one person to another. Therefore, in describing the two psychological tendencies that we believe are the main driving force of modern leftism, we by no means claim to be describing the psychology of every individual leftist. Given the complexity of the real-life situation, no portrayal of it can pretend to be more than a rough approximation to the truth. Moreover, our discussion is meant to apply to modern leftism only. There are similarities between modern leftists and those of the 19th and early 20th centuries, but there are also differences, so we leave open the question of the extent to which our

9. The two psychological tendencies that underlie modern leftism we call feelings of inferiority and oversocialization. Feelings of inferiority are characteristic of modern leftism as a whole, while oversocialization is characteristic only of a certain segment of modern leftism; but this segment is highly influential.

Feelings of inferiority

10. By "feelings of inferiority" we mean not only inferiority feelings in the strict sense but a whole spectrum of related traits: low self-esteem, feelings of powerlessness, depressive tendencies, defeatism, guilt, self-hatred, etc. We contend that a majority of modern leftists have some such feelings (possibly more or less repressed) and that these feelings are decisive in determining the direction of modern leftism.

11. When someone tends to interpret as derogatory almost anything that is said about him (or about groups with whom he identifies) we conclude that he has inferiority feelings or low self-esteem. This tendency is pronounced among minority-rights activists, whether or not they belong to the minority groups whose rights they defend. They are hypersensitive about the words used to designate minorities and about anything that is said concerning minorities. The terms "negro", "oriental", "handicapped" or "chick" for an African, an Asian, a disabled person or a woman originally had no derogatory connotation. "Bro" and "chick" were merely the feminine equivalents of "guy", "dude" or "fellow". The negative