

Technology Shakes Civilization

by Joseph Sanlei

No social scientist worthy of the name can ignore the sociological impact of technological evolution upon humankind. In fact, many social scientists, notably the Marxists, would pose the argument that technology not only is the producer of society's goods but is society's parent.

In the pre-Marxian era of social science, many of the great thinkers of the Enlightenment recognized the extent to which technology would shake the old orders of civilization and enable the creation, in their own place, of entirely new entities.

Thomas Jefferson wrote, in a letter to John Adams in 1813, that "Science has liberated the ideas of those who read and reflect and the American revolutionary example has kindled feelings of right in the people. An insurrection has consequently begun of science, talents, and courage, against rank and birth, which have fallen into contempt--- Science is progressive, and talents and enterprise are on the alert -- Rank and birth, and tinsel aristocracy will finally shrink into insignificance."

Thus Jefferson recognized the implicit link inseparably binding science and politics. Technology, science applied, has within its essence, given the quality and concerns of the men and women who employ it, the power of ostensibly altering civilization until the end of the human epoch. Be that power employed to the progressive and collective benefit or

regressive and universal detriment of our race, and even the manner by which and progress may be assured of technology, is one of the moment's greatest uncertainties. What is known for sure is that the power of science is very real.

When (in the New Mexico desert) the first atomic weapon was detonated, Dr. Robert Oppenheimer, who was in charge of the project which produced the bomb, said that his only thought as the mushroom cloud rose into the sky, was one from the Hindu Scriptures (Bavigad Gita) : "Today I am become Death -- the destroyer of worlds."

When the bomb was finally used upon a human target, twice in fact, Imperial Japan's subsequent surrender clouded the new omnipotent danger with the joy of transitory victory and peace.

It would be wrong to now attempt to place culpability for all of the world's ills since 1945 upon some abstract notion of a conspiratorial scientific community - this is neither true nor beneficial to the cause of lasting peace. For the so-called "scientific community" (despite what some sophomore science students may tell you) is but a specialists microcosm, fully a component part of the general academic community, and beyond that; the entire human community. As such, no scape goat, were it to be science, scientists, or any of a number of political regimes, can be sacrificed, with resulting salvation, upon the altars of human

ignorance and fear.

Perhaps no one, at least no one in particular, is responsible per se for the present apocalyptic nature of our state. If this be so, then it clearly means that the old methods of revolution, class, war, etc. may no longer be seen as viable means of attaining an eventual, and ever


illusory utopia on earth. Sure, the technology and economic developments of Jefferson's time, combined with liberal economic thought, produced the almost inevitable revolutionary results; the expulsion from the American colonies turned Republic of an archaic and despotic monarchy, but what for the betterment of the human condition could have resulted in the struggles outcome were it not for the wisdom in governmental matters of the revolutionaries. A few years following the American Revolution M. de la Fayette's prediction that it would "serve as a lesson to the oppressor and an example to the oppressed" was realized in a revolution in France, with much different results. For the implements of war soon turned from the aristocratic oppressor upon revolutionary by the hand of revolutionary, and led to a new tyranny. It was certainly not that the Americans en masse were in any way superior to the French that one revolution was to succeed and the other fail, but rather that the conditions of America in the 1780's provided it with a stable post-revolutionary leadership unattainable, for lack

of stability, in France. No where in the contemporary world does there exist a stability comparable to that of early America. Thus the democratic countries, what few of them there are, must learn to solve our very pressing problems by the harnessing of our technological strength for the revolutionary alternative can provide nought but bloody disaster.

Next week I hope to provide some concrete examples of ways in which technological know-how can, and is, beginning the race against time to save our race and civilization and liberty. So barring thermo-nuclear annihilation between now and next Thursday. See you then.




| | | |
|----------|------------|-------|
| LOCAL | WASH | SNOW |
| ABOVE | ALTA | LAVA |
| ROMAN | PEARL | UNIT |
| SMITE | SALTMINE | |
| ELIAS | WOE | AES |
| TON | LLMS | WAN |
| ALT | SEEMS | ROMAN |
| ALEE | DEALS | DALE |
| LADLE | SCANS | NOW |
| DAB | KNOT | YET |
| AFT | COG | TRESS |
| PLETHORA | EALING | |
| PATE | BACKSLIDER | |
| LIRA | OSTE | EDEMA |
| ERAL | OPEN | REDAM |



THE BIKE SHOP

COME ON UP TO 2ND FLOOR
FOR ALL YOUR SPORTS AND
CASUAL CLOTHING.



63 UNIVERSITY AVE.



DISCOTHEQUE NIGHTLY

9 P.M. - 1 A.M.

MONDAY NIGHT
IS

ROCK NIGHT

TUESDAY NIGHT
IS

STUDENT NIGHT

THE "INN OUT OF THE SUN" GAMING ROOM
1 - 7 Monday to Saturday
POOL PINBALL

11:30 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.
with
DAILY SPECIALS

189 KENT STREET
CHARLOTTETOWN P.E.I. Phone 894-4291