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Immolations to the Juggernaut

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He spoke on "Societal Attitudes Toward Life and Death" at the Chicago NFCPG meeting in September, 1976.

Any sensitive observer of the contemporary American scene must be impressed with the death emphasis of our culture. From almost out of nowhere dramatic, lethal trends are flourishing within our society. Twenty years ago it was rare to find a course on death listed in a college catalog. Today, rare is the university without such course listings.

In 1973 the Supreme Court of the United States legalized abortion up to six months of age. In 1976 the state of California passed a "death with dignity" law. In between these two points, infanticide, which had been covertly practiced, became publicized. Prior to the Supreme Court decision, organ transplantation had stimulated thinking toward a "death with dignity" direction. Organ transplantation put an effective rest to the unsettled questions of the relationship between the human brain,

personhood and consciousness. Prior to transplantation, particularly heart transplantation, the questionable assumption that all that is uniquely and distinctively human is contained in the cerebral cortex was unsettled. Bernard challenged medical ethics to come to a decision. The decision was made by default or perhaps in the overwhelming glare of public approval of the skilled surgeon's hand. In 1975, in the face of a popular press demand for her demise, the legal system of the United States consented to Karen Quinlan's death. Aside from the monkey wrench placed by her obstinate refusal to die, we might have had a national "death with dignity" law.

Over the past few years, the homosexual movement has emerged from the closet. Parades and appeals to various governmental bodies are the order of the day. Today it is academically *de rigueur* to regard homosexuality as being either as legitimate an expression of sexuality as heterosexuality, or at worst, a minor aberration. Twenty years ago the pill became widely disseminated. About fifteen years ago, pets became such a powerful influence in American life that every national general magazine and newspaper felt constrained to contain a pet column. In 1975

and 1976, the Supreme Court reinstated capital punishment.

Why now? Why at this point in our nation's history have these phenomena come upon us? Our nation is not operating in a vacuum. Given the strategic importance of the United States in world intercourse, what a given nation does not have in the way of deathward laws as compared to the U.S., it is almost certainly destined to obtain. Again the question "why"? I would like to present the major reason for the existence of these phenomena and for even more lethal shifts in social policy . . . introducing the Juggernaut and kin.

The Juggernaut is the prime mover behind the plethora of human-life-crimping social policies. The Juggernaut is most starkly revealed in its basic character in Table 1.

"Producers" refers to all the workers in manufacturing, mining, utilities, transportation, communications, and farming.

These persons comprise the heart and soul of a social system. All other kinds of services hinge upon them. Other persons in the system are not necessarily non-productive. About a third of the populace is children and teenagers who have small productive but clear replacement functions. Further, there are some ancillary workers who contribute in tangential ways to production (teachers and medical personnel, for instance, and to some degree government workers). But no matter how considered, the proportion of productive workers in the population has been steadily declining. Over the past 126 years the diminution in the proportion of producers in the population has been dramatic. In 1975 the United States reached a point where only 12% of the U.S. population on-the-whole, fell into the productive category, essentially a reduction of two-thirds in the proportion of those who are *necessary* for social functioning. This is the Juggernaut.

TABLE 1
Producers as a Proportion of the Population

Year	No. of Productive Workers in Millions			Total Population in Millions	Productive % of Population
	Agriculture	Goods	Total		
1850	4.9	2.7	7.6	23	33
1900	10.7	11.0	21.7	76	29
1920	11.1	16.5	27.6	106	26
1930	10.3	15.6	25.8	123	20
1940	9.5	15.9	25.4	132	19
1950	7.2	18.5	25.7	151	17
1960	5.5	20.4	25.9	178	15
1970	3.5	22.5	26.0	203	13

naut. In a social system such as ours in which profit is the impetus to production, in a system in which goods and services are provided basically to those who can pay and pay enough for a profit, the Juggernaut must eventually turn social policies against mankind. The intellectual noises of our day are cries of scarcity, of too many people. The sounds largely stem from the Juggernaut.

Forces at Work

Many forces are at work in every modern social system. To avoid gross oversimplification of a complex situation let's admit that there are a number of equally useful ways to analyze the components of society. From my perspective, the activities of a given society are influenced by eight forces. At times each is working independently relative to some or all of the others. Usually each is working against the aims and interests of one or more of the others, and, rarely do they all coalesce. These forces are:

1) the basic "ethic" of a social system; the "real" way it functions, its working principles, including its aims and the means generally employed to attain these aims (the Juggernaut lives here);

2) the system-maintenance ethic. Preservation of the system at any and all costs is the general Machiavellian rule. Each bureaucracy also seeks to maintain and expand its power within the system;

3) the propaganda of the social system; the sugar coating and the various sacred principles that are sometimes related to the basic ethic, but more often than not, are unrelated in any meaningfully functional way to the basic ethic. These principles are espoused and proclaimed, frequently being identical in societies supposedly at war with each other (soul of the son of Juggernaut);

4) extra-system ethical systems; most of which, like Topsy, "just grew." Sometimes they emerged to meet possible needs of the past, but have hung around fighting for peoples' loyalties. Christianity, vegetarianism and most "isms" locate here;

5) within-system private interest groups, as, for instance, the Chamber of Commerce, Gulf Oil Corporation, Gay Liberation, etc.;

6) fashions and fads that appear to just "spring up"; often these have beginnings and affinities with one or more of the other six, but they also often come and go as historic curiosities;

7) idiosyncratic, personal notions of prominent/influential people; no matter how bizarre, the personal beliefs of a head of state or of a famous singer have some influence;

8) the mass media's need for "news" or content. Often this modern phenomenon creates "something out of nothing" and bequeaths as a residue a new private interest group, a fad, or additional idiosyncracies.

Each of these forces is influencing modern society at all times. While official, main-line social policy is the outcome of the struggle between these forces, each influences social functioning to some degree. Only a part of official social policy achieves perfect or nearly-perfect expression. Most official policies merely set the stage on which real policy plays. There is no clean, one-to-one relationship between official social policy and what is actually done. Official social policy provides the setting for society's morality plays. Generally, real actions cannot deviate too far from the official rules. Therefore, all who seek to direct morality fight to control official social policy.

Each of these forces varies in the strength of its expression depending upon a multitude of factors. The "basic ethic" of a system typically exerts a strong, fairly constant pressure on social policy. It, after all, determines what most of the members of a social system actually do most of the time, and the Juggernaut is having a decided influence on what people do.

What a person does, and how he goes about doing it, has a powerful influence on how and what he believes. The propaganda of a social system also has considerable and relatively constant influence. While some ebb and flow of allegiance to the "verbal edifice" that a society erects will occur, usually societies "push" it enough that

many, if not most, members of the society will bear the edifice in mind in many of their decisions and attitudes. As, in the long run, what people do has more influence upon what they believe than what they believe has influence on what they do, the basic ethic exerts an unremitting pressure upon official propaganda to bring it into line. Presumably, in a perfectly mature social system, there would be no difference between the ethic and the propaganda. But no known system has achieved anything approximating this perfection.

Extra-system interest groups exert highly variable pressure on social policy. Very few persons genuinely dedicate their existence to any of these systems. Most of the adherents are rather mildly endorsing of the philosophy. Revivals and falling-aways are the norm, so that at times Christianity or environmentalism will have considerable impact upon society, but generally they will pipe minor notes.

Idiosyncratic influences and, more rarely, fads, may prove almost overwhelming. From an "ethic" standpoint, Hitler's dispatching of retardates made system-sense. But his treatment of the Jews was, from a system-maintenance standpoint, incredible.

Ethics and Pressure

The ethic of a system exerts about as much pressure on all the other influences as they exert upon social policy. Churches, for

instance, constantly have difficulty reconciling the ethics their members actually practice with those that the church proclaims. As man is inherently casuistical, the church's teachings are pressed toward endorsement of the ethic. Often churches and other such special interest groups' members have three official, and oftentimes contradictory ideal systems inhabiting their minds: the "ancient" truths, the propaganda truths, and the ethical truths, all seen as emanating from official church dogma. Many of the intellectual endeavors of such bodies are directed toward apologies for such reconciliations. Thus many churches appear almost as "patriotic" as they are Christian, and often, the membership can only squarely agree on the patriotic/ethic-serving component, otherwise being scattered every-which-way on the theological field.

As the ethic is the most important constant in the social policy equation, examination of it and the success of its expression in the U.S. is a good bet to provide explanation as to the content and the "now" of misanthropy. Capitalism, as a system, is dedicated to the production and sale of commodities. It is not concerned with getting men into heaven, or assuring a bountiful life for all. It is, in large measure, just because of capitalism's indifference to conflicting value systems, that it has swept before it any and all other kinds of social systems. Capitalism produces

commodities cheaper than any other system. *How* it does this is of no concern to the buyer. He gets the price-break. Within the capitalist system, the less socially necessary labor-time expended per individual commodity, the cheaper it can be sold, and the more certain the profit. As the capitalist enterprise is dedicated to producing the cheapest product, no matter how that is accomplished, other kinds of values are, whenever possible, ignored. The surest way for a given capitalist concern to "make it" is to produce more with the same work-force, or produce as much with a smaller work-force. As demand is constantly changing, the safest course is toward the latter. Removal of men from production to the greatest degree possible is a clear goal. Similarly, the fewer the frills accorded the worker and the work place, the cheaper the product can be produced and consequently sold. Cutting costs, no matter where they might be found, is an important consideration. From a systems standpoint, it is indeed unfortunate that workers eat, require clothing, vacations, etc. The perfect worker would be one who worked and nothing more. Consumers if perfect, would consume and spend without limit. Each manufacturer earnestly searches for more customers even as he whittles away at his own workforce. The capitalist is encouraged to save lest he run shy of capital; he encourages saving and abstemiousness on the part of his workforce. This encourage-

ment comes not just from example and admonition ("tuck a buck a day away"), but also under the fear of being unemployed for some period of time (a fate that regularly falls to a sixth of the U.S. work force in any given year). The basic ethic of capitalism ranges between the abstemious and niggardly.

This basic ethic shrieks in the face of the Juggernaut. From a systems standpoint the Juggernaut was destined to occur. Machines must necessarily disenfranchise man from production. But the niggardly-abstemious ethic of capitalism does not fawn upon such a circumstance. Since the basic substratum of society, the producers, consists of only 12% of the population (plus necessary ancillary workers) the rest of the work force is ancillary and/or boondoggling. While genuine human interests may or may not be served by many of the others who happen to be employed, from a systems standpoint, most of them are superfluous. The niggardliness of the capitalist ethic exerts a pressure toward the application of any and all persons to some semblance of productive effort. So all able bodied men, women and children are encouraged to do something reminiscent of producing. Even the not-so-able-bodied are stroked to expend effort to produce ("Hire the handicapped"). Additional pressures toward "providing jobs" come from the propaganda component of the social influences (the "lib-

erals" derive the greater part of their sustenance from this quarter). The "conservatives" rightly recognize that the liberals are "throwing money to the wind." The liberals have generally been unable to more than cosmetize the situation, while the conservatives seek to make life so miserable for the non-productive that they will voluntarily "check out." *Fundamentally* the system is working toward the elimination of all but the genuinely productive and those needed to replace them upon demise. The Juggernaut renders the greater portion of the remaining population unadulterated chaff.

The Juggernaut reduces the need for people but people continue to be produced. What is to be done with these people? The propaganda system's ethic is invoked to employ many of these superfluous people to meet the human needs of other superfluous people in the brittle, plastic socialism of the welfare state. The boondoggling son of Juggernaut is born. Today the son bids fair to eclipse his father. Because the young are kept in school to keep them out of the labor force, teachers are required, health professionals are required, etc. If there were no young, if there were far fewer young, the numbers of such service providers could be correspondingly reduced. The forces tending to efficiency have pushed the older from productivity to retirement. In retirement the old require an ever growing array of services.

Many of the surplus labor force spawned by the Juggernaut are diverted to meet the needs of the elderly. If there were no old persons or if there were far fewer old, the numbers of such service providers . . . Since the monies, activities and policies have to be monitored, the bureaucracy grows apace. The keepers of bureaucratic records, the form makers, the form checkers, all of these grow. But if the numbers of people — particularly this surplus population — could be reduced, the son of Juggernaut could be reduced. And with his diminution would come the elimination of a veritable horde of service providers, suppliers, accountants, legalizers and the like.

Juggernaut's Daughter

While Juggernaut's son is past his teen years and threatens to impoverish the system, Juggernaut has spawned a daughter. Even as the son of Juggernaut is involved with increasing the number of government workers from the 3.5 million in 1935 to the 15 million in 1975, so the daughter of Juggernaut, social service spending, has burgeoned. In 1900 approximately 3% of the gross national product was expended by the various levels of government on social welfare. By 1975 this had grown to 19% of the gross national product. While much of the social welfare expenditure has been in public education, considerable growth has been affected in "freebie" sorts of programs such as "aid to de-

pendent children," and other forms of welfare. Some of the people Juggernaut displaced are consuming the fruits of Juggernaut, albeit in a niggardly fashion. For something to do to or with the surplus population programs are created for those marginally benefited by the system, and go a way towards providing for the many bureaucrats and professionals who have made the programs. Yet all these programs are added on. They are not truly part of the system except as a systems-saving effort. The plasticity of this chintzy "socialism" is evident to all.

Juggernaut and his son have existed long enough that the son has brought forth an issue, the grandson of Juggernaut. Kreps, (1962), noted that after the great depression and a war that pulled the U.S. social system from the depression, the U.S. economy started in another interesting cycle. As she pointed out, "With every wave of prosperity the unemployment rate in the United States falls. But the unemployment rate does not fall sufficiently to recoup the losses sustained in the previous depression. There is a stepwise function occurring in the unemployment rate. Generally each succeeding recession leaves an additional 1% residue of unemployed in the trough." In 1962 Kreps made a straight line prediction. She noted that if the system continued to operate as it had in the past she would have predicted the unemployment rate of 10% in 1975. The

official rate was 9%. At this writing the federal government is hoping for a 7% rate for 1977, and the same or slightly lower for 1978. The grandson of Juggernaut has added yet another dimension to the press for the elimination of people.

As if the Juggernaut family were not large enough, the wife of Juggernaut has appeared on the scene. Tired of their quasi-productive status and 1½ class citizenship, the females of our social system are entering the labor force in ever-increasing numbers and exacerbating an already explosive situation.

The situation is obviously getting more dire. From every quarter the Juggernaut family presses upon the social system. Experience has shown that men are far more willing to offer themselves than their social system to destruction. A change in social system is, at most points in man's history, unthinkable. Some have argued, and their case has merit, that the ultimate of servitude, the ultimate endorsement of institutions over mankind is war. In the Juggernaut we face an even more formidable misanthropic foe.

As we look across our social system we see that every possible way of reducing the value of man, every possible way of reducing the number of men, is being implemented or social policy is being honed for such implementation.

So we see in our lifetimes the following transpiring: 1) First and perhaps foremost, abstinence from reproduction is encouraged in a multitude of ways: a) More schooling is required which makes early entry into marriage less feasible. b) Education/propaganda about the virtues of contraception and greater assurance that if *nothing* else is learned in school, contraceptive techniques and practice will be. c) Late marriage is encouraged. This takes at least two forms. In the first, one is encouraged to play the field for various reasons and then after having "sowed oats," settle down. The other pole is represented by, "get your financial career house in order, then children." Recent studies have indicated that the housing pressure is inducing couples to lower fertility. d) Childless marriage is being encouraged and as more people see themselves as professionals and as more professionals see themselves as duty-bound to remain childless or to have a minimum number of children, childlessness grows. e) Delayed child-bearing is encouraged, both from a selfishness standpoint as well as 'getting to know one another and then having children.' f) Small families are encouraged. *Psychology Today* and other journals abound in articles extolling the virtues of the single child or two child family and all the concomitant benefits that supposedly accrue to such children. g) Voluntary sterilization is encouraged. This ranges not only from legitimizing masturbation but also in-

volves the establishment of masturbation parlors throughout the United States, a phenomenon of relatively recent vintage. i) All forms of nonreproductive sex are now being encouraged. Straight line homosexuality creates no more problems for the Juggernaut. j) All quasi-sub-standard forms of nonreproductive sex are being tolerated ranging from bestiality to necrophilia to fetishism and cries for the legitimization of prostitution. All of these forms are singularly unapt to result in children.

2) Abortion has been legalized and is being encouraged, even mandated. This year, for the first time, a major U.S. city features a higher rate of abortions than of live births. The city? Our nation's capitol. 3) Pets are being legitimized as adequate alternatives to childbearing. 4) Abortion is being encouraged for all and mandated for certain classes of persons, particularly those who are nonproductive or subsisting at the expense of the daughter of Juggernaut. Recall again the situation of abortion in Washington D.C. 5) Amniocentesis is being encouraged as a national policy. Amniocentesis results in a fraction of involuntary abortions and opens up the possibility of further mandated abortions.

6) Infanticide (to be legalized) is even now being encouraged in an indirect way for infants born with deformities. 7) Suicide (to be legalized) is being encouraged.

Particular emphasis is being directed toward the suiciding of young adults and teenagers. 8) Brain death is being accepted as death and beyond that, even the approximation of brain damage will be accepted as death indeed. 9) Defective and disabled persons may well be sent to death. 10) An age set, probably 65, beyond which a person without means will not be provided extensive medical service. 11) An age set, probably 80, beyond which a person without means will not be provided medical service. 12) An age set, probably 85, beyond which a person will not be permitted to exist. These social policies flow naturally from the Juggernaut and his family.

The Juggernaut lives among us. He influences the literature of our time, the scope of our scientific reporting, the kinds of things upon which scientists will agree.

Society's Decision

Part of the magnificence of society's decision is its breadth of onset. In the past a "social decision" has often been made by the ruling class or group and then attributed to society as a whole. Today we are, in-the-main, dealing with a phenomenon of sufficient breadth to warrant characterizing it as "social." There is no plot. Garden variety thought processes have just been applied to the human surplus in much the same way it is applied to a surplus of workers within a given

capitalist concern. When the work runs down, then people get laid off or fired. While those in power in our society are somewhat more behind the effort to rid society of its surplus (Nelson Rockefeller comes to mind), the general public is in step also. All across the nation, various groups and individuals are just deciding to "fire" some people permanently. Some groups are so situated in society that they naturally turn to firing the ill (such as M.D.'s). Others happen to sell drugs to reduce the quantity of human life (as drug corporations), still others tend to advance the charms of suicide or infanticide (some suicideologists, historians, etc.). Those with the means to immolate to the Juggernaut, are. Extra-system philosophic systems are being altered to conform to this new thrust (churches are falling all over themselves to be the first to approve the newest life-crimping technique). From a system's survival perspective this is as it should be. Voluntarism is far preferable to forced reduction. The most desirable voluntarism would feature the dying pleading to be killed (Gilmore is a Juggernaut *immolant here*), the unemployed contraceptizing/aborting/infanticiding their offspring and/or suiciding, large segments of the populace (especially the minorities) turning to homosexuality, and everywhere people gentling each other toward death and her friends. The more morality that can be linked with personal lethality, the better. If, say, a po-

tential suicider can cloak his act in an altruistic "to help society conserve" verbiage, then his passing is more apt to have both personal and social appeal. Voluntarism is preferred. Today's coercive techniques tend to be reserved for the poor and ignorant. But expansion toward the "better folk" is certain. Currently the members of the professional class are permitted almost total voluntarism. And since professionals do a good job of talking up having no or few children, accepting homosexuality and suicide, etc., allowing them to do as they want is okay. Professionals have a solid suicide rate, never fail to have fewer children than would be required to replace themselves, and generally "cooperate." But given the magnitude of the population reduction that will be required to keep our social system afloat, it is highly likely that even professionals will have to be hurried to their graves.

There are few in society who do not recognize, at some gut level, that the system is running out of room, and they are responding by laying their hands to those population-trimming devices at their disposal. The sheer diversity of support for population trimming and the multitudinous means of attaining it inspire attention.

Increasingly the good life will be seen as far more important than the duration of life. In fact, it will be realized that a life extending beyond good or even ex-

cellent health is simply not worth living. The dilemma is acute. The choices are plain. Waste either property or people. Only the latter choice rings ethically clear.

Another dimension to population-trimming is added by the mass media. In the past, social systems lumberingly modified their population policies in reaction to changing conditions and/or philosophies. As children were taught by their parents and other adults, lessons tended to the conservatism of habit. Institutionalization of formal schooling permitted more rapid adjustments. Instead of having to modify most adults' cognitions, beliefs of teachers increasingly held key to the minds of children. With the advent of the mass media, especially TV, a relative handful holds sway over much of the pos-

sibility of change. Where a single substantial change might require centuries in former social systems, the contemporary media-effect permits of many substantive changes within decades. Civilized man has always knowingly labored but a generation from savagery. The next generation has to be trained in the ways of civilization lest it revert. Modern man has lived under the atomic cloud. But no matter what, previous generations have always been able to bank on the sexual fires of youth to replenish the race. The potential of mass conversion to population-reduction raises a new spectre — if the young are diverted from reproduction and/or distaste for child-bearing grows sufficiently, we may find the sound of a baby's cry as unusual as the song of a pelican in the desert.

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