potentialities, giving the impression that these techniques were indeed produced mechanically' (Norbert Wiener, *Cybernetics and Society*).

Progress in science and technology imposes serious problems on mankind, in particular on scientists themselves. But we cannot hold back science on that account, since it is a product of man's natural curiosity.

If there had been sceptics with a lot of foresight, they would have said that the invention of a stone axe has provided a very dangerous toy which ultimately would lead to the invention of missiles with atomic warheads. It is, however, clear that the possibility of using the fruits of man's genius for evil does not mean that these should not be generated; it only evidences the necessity of fighting for these achievements to be used for good and not for evil. History shows that despite the danger of fire, gunpowder, electricity, atomic energy and many other 'dangerous' inventions, progressive forces of society have managed to control these elements.

The correct conclusion to be drawn from all that has been said above, is that in our time nobody – and in particular not the intellectuals – can shelve responsibility from scientific analysis of the development of society, from influencing actively and purposefully this process; they cannot transfer to other people the responsibility for the social consequences of their activities and for the entire course of modern development of society.

It is incorrect to conclude that society should not use computers for development and realisation of a programme of controlling its own development. The long-term freedom consists of recognising and utilising objective relationships, which is impossible without machines, in view of the enormous quantity of information which has to be processed rapidly and in a complex manner for the purpose of revealing the main tendencies, finding optimal solutions, etc. Control by means of machines will be more perfect than control without machines; ignorance or lack of skill has never provided an advantage in any type of work. It is only necessary to realise that the solutions suggested by the machines may harbour unexpected and fateful consequences similar to the magic talisman from the story of Jacob *The Monkey's Paw*, which fulfils the desires of its master in a ruinous manner. Therefore there is nothing to free man from his responsibility to make choices if he does not want to achieve a society whose stability is maintained by 'circumspect and conscious injustice'.

All this means that we cannot entirely and blindly accept solutions which were adopted on the basis of a criterion which differs from our ideals, our concepts of a desirable organisation of society, on human relations and man itself regardless of who made the decision, whether it is an electronic brain or a bureaucratic machine. The guarantee of progress of human society is in active, free and independent efforts of all thinking and progressive people.

The future depends on our present efforts, on the depth of our understanding of the objective development of society, on our courage, willpower and ability to act. We want to see in the future a really happy society of free and good and noble descendants. Then we will be their worthy ancestors!

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