

Launching of the Rolex Awards for Enterprise, 1984: Address by President of IUCN

It is with rejoicing and personal feelings of pleasure that I attend this official launching of the Rolex Awards for Enterprise, 1984, and I have four reasons for this happy feeling:

First:—These Awards aim at providing recognition of one of the most noble qualities of Man: enterprise. The spirit of enterprise, a combination of the human instinct of curiosity and the human attribute of intelligence and orderly thinking, was the driving force that led Man towards the discovery of this world and its resources, the betterment of the quality of his life, and—eventually—the masterful stewardship of the globe. It is the driving force that is now leading Man towards probing the space and exploring the unlimited horizons of the universe.

Second:—It has become usual that industries in advanced countries invest funds for encouraging studies towards advancement of science and technology in areas that pertain to their respective concerns and that bear directly on their industrial processes. But here is an industry—Rolex—that provides funds for encouraging studies in applied sciences and inventions, exploration and discovery, and environment. These are all related to the future development and survival of mankind, and not just the future development and survival of the watch industry.

Third:—In our present days there seems to be a myth that seeks to persuade us that there is disaccord between industry and the concerns of the human en-

vironment. The Rolex Awards, the launching of which we are here to witness, set the environment as one of the three principal categories of projects that the Awards seek to encourage and promote. This is a most welcome move towards those of us who care about the environment and the conservation of its components for the future of Man and the prospects of the quality of his life. This is why I welcome especially the underlining of environment as one of the principal categories of projects of which proponents are eligible for these Awards.

Fourth:—The Awards seek to encourage and nurture promising scientific ideas and intellectual ventures presented by individuals from all over the world. We recognize that meritorious ideas and brilliance are human attributes that are not restricted by race, creed, or geography; and we are here to seek the help of the media to bring this message to the world at large.*

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* Full details concerning these valuable awards may be obtained from The Secretariat, Rolex Awards for Enterprise, P.O. Box 178, 1211 Genève 26, Switzerland, by whom completed application forms must be received by 31 March 1983.—Ed.

Environmental Problems and Human Evolution: A General Theory

People commonly ascribe environmental problems of Man to human error or inexperience, but are far from being united in their opinions of possible solutions to overall environmental problems. Some believe that Man's activities should be harmonized with natural processes in The (whole) Biosphere, whereas others claim that conflict between Man and The Biosphere is inevitable and must continue. Supporters of different environmental conceptions go on disputing which of them is preferable or even absolutely right, and some express the need for a general environmental theory.

Trying to synthesize knowledge in this field, I have found that relations between Man and The Biosphere, including human environmental problems, can, at the general level, be explained on the basis of separation of the psychosocial component of Man (i.e. human psychic activity) from the biological component of Man (i.e. human biological parts). The main idea of this theory is as follows:

Every biological species is exposed to disturbances of the relations between itself and its environment. But there is a difference between Man, on one hand, and all other species of biota on the other hand. For whereas in all other species most of their ecological 'problems' are caused by outside factors, in Man most of his ecological (environmental) problems are caused by himself, i.e. by inside factors. The difference is caused by a specific feature of Man, the human psychic activity of thinking, involving consciousness, which is not subjected to biological laws but which nevertheless controls Man's actions in The Biosphere.

The conceptions that suppose the psychic processes to be inevitably dependent on the biological structures of Man, which thus serve as their material basis, cannot

satisfactorily explain why human psychic activity causes disturbances of the relations between Man and his environment, and even endangers the very existence of its (biological) material basis. By accepting that the human psychic processes can exist independently of Man as a biological phenomenon, Man's behaviour in The Biosphere and towards other members of his mind-possessing species becomes understandable.

The independent existence of the human psychic processes is made possible by artificial abiotic structures (namely, electronic computers) that can serve (in the manner of certain biological structures) as a material basis of psychic processes. At present, the psychic activity of Man is not independent of his biological parts, but its dependence decreases with the development of computers and 'artificial intelligence'.

Instead of dealing with Man as a unit which interacts with other parts of The Biosphere, this theory distinguishes the biological component of Man (which is inevitably dependent on other parts of The Biosphere) and the psychosocial component of Man which can, on the contrary, exist independently of The Biosphere. This distinction presages different evolutionary trends of the two components, following the separation of the human psychic processes from the biological parts of Man accompanied by damage to The Biosphere—including the biological parts of Man as an integral component of The Biosphere in the manner so frequently insisted in editorials etc. in *Environmental Conservation*.

PETR MOLÍK
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