

**Guenther Anders on the consequences of a
technologically fully integrated world**

Letter 1

Mr. Claude R. Eatherly
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Waco, Texas

Dear Mr. Eatherly,

3 June 1959

The writer of these lines is not known to you. You - on the other hand – are known to us, my friends and myself. How you cope or not cope with your tragedy, that we follow with our hearts beating, regardless whether we live in New York, in Vienna or Tokyo. Not because we would be curious, or because your ‘case’ would interest us medically or psychologically. We are neither doctors nor psychologists. But because we are involving ourselves, full of anguish and concern involving ourselves to become clear about those moral problems, that obstruct the road for all of us these days. The technification of existence: the fact, that we unawares and indirectly, somehow like cogs in machines, can be slotted into actions, the effects of which we don’t oversee and which – if we could oversee them – could not consent to – this fact has changed the moral situation for all of us.

Technology has brought with it, that we can become *guiltless guilty* in a way, that didn’t exist in the technologically less advanced time of our fathers.

You understand what you have to do with this: Ultimately you surely belong to the first ones, who have found themselves actually caught in this new kind of guilt, in which today or tomorrow each one of us could find ourselves caught. To you has happened what tomorrow could happen to all of us. This is the reason why you play for us the important role as a key example, yes as a *forerunner*.

From: **Off limits fuer das Gewissen**. The correspondence between the Hiroshima-Pilot **Claude Eatherly** and **Guenther Anders**. Rowohlt. Hamburg 1961. Transl Henk Bak.