

AD WORK

Nothing except torture is more painful for a healthy person than having nothing to do. Forced labor, unless excruciating, is preferable to forced idleness, which is not only boring but also demoralizing and humiliating. (See Hobb 19 for experimental evidence.) Jail is bearable so long as one is allowed to do something, if only reading or chatting with fellow inmates.

It would seem that the ranking is this:

Working on the chosen job > Working on an indifferent job > Working on a disagreeable job > Working in a concentration camp > Forced idleness in company > Forced idleness in solitary confinement.

If this ranking is in fact true and, moreover, if it is true that society benefits from the spontaneous ^{human} disposition to work, it is a moral duty to redesign society in such a way that the great majority of adults may find work in their chosen line of occupation or, at any rate, in an occupation that gives them personal satisfaction and at the same time is socially useful. Only ~~very~~ extremely

handicapped people, such as ^{the} severely mentally retarded and the psychotic, should be exempt from doing any socially useful work. If this be accepted, it must be admitted that ~~unemployment~~ ~~or unemployment~~ a rate of unemployment higher than, say, 0.5 percent (as in Switzerland), is not only socially undesirable but also morally degrading.