

PLACES AND FORMS OF POWER

DYSTOPIC SOCIETIES



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by George Orwell

'The real power, the power we have to fight for night and day, is not power over things, but over men.' He paused, and for a moment assumed again his air of a schoolmaster questioning a promising pupil: 'How does one man assert his power over another, Winston?'

Winston thought. 'By making him suffer,' he said.

'Exactly. By making him suffer. Obedience is not enough. Unless he is suffering, how can you be sure that he is obeying your will and not his own? Power is in inflicting pain and humiliation. Power is in tearing human minds to pieces and putting them together again in new shapes of your own choosing. Do you begin to see, then, what kind of world we are creating? It is the exact opposite of the stupid hedonistic Utopias that the old reformers imagined. A world of fear and treachery is torment, a world of trampling and being trampled upon, a world which will grow not less but more merciless as it refines itself. Progress in our world will be progress towards more pain. The old civilizations claimed that they were founded on love or justice. Ours is founded upon hatred. In our world there will be no emotions except fear, rage, triumph, and self-abasement. Everything else we shall destroy everything. Already we are breaking down the habits of thought which have survived from before the Revolution. We have cut the links between child and parent, and between man and man, and between man and woman. No one dares trust a wife or a child or a friend any longer. But in the future there will be no wives and no friends. Children will be taken from their mothers at birth, as one takes eggs from a hen. The sex instinct will be eradicated. Procreation will be an annual formality like the renewal of a ration card. We shall abolish the orgasm. Our neurologists are at work upon it now. There will be no loyalty, except loyalty towards the Party. There will be no love, except the love of Big Brother. There will be no laughter, except the laugh of triumph over a defeated enemy. There will be no art, no literature, no science. When we are omnipotent we shall have no more need of science. There will be no distinction between beauty and ugliness. There will be no curiosity, no enjoyment of the process of life. All competing pleasures will be destroyed. But always — do not forget this, Winston — always there will be the intoxication of power, constantly increasing and constantly growing subtler. Always, at every moment, there will be the thrill of victory, the sensation of trampling on an enemy who is helpless. If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face — for ever.'

One Nation Under CCTV

by Banksy



The Great Dictator

by Charlie Chaplin

« I'm sorry, but I don't want to be an Emperor, that's not my business. I don't want to rule or conquer anyone. I should like to help everyone if possible, Jew, gentile, black man, white. We all want to help one another, human beings are like that. We all want to live by each other's happiness, not by each other's misery. We don't want to hate and despise one another. In this world there is room for everyone and the good earth is rich and can provide for everyone.

The way of life can be free and beautiful. But we have lost the way.

Greed has poisoned men's souls, has barricaded the world with hate; has goose-stepped us into misery and bloodshed.

We have developed speed, but we have shut ourselves in;
machinery that gives abundance has left us in want.

Our knowledge has made us cynical,
our cleverness hard and unkind.

We think too much and feel too little.

More than machinery we need humanity,
more than cleverness we need kindness and gentleness.

Without these qualities life will be violent and all will be lost.

The aeroplane and the radio have brought us closer together. The very nature of these inventions cries out for the goodness in men, cries out for universal brotherhood for the unity of us all. Even now my voice is reaching millions throughout the world, millions of despairing men, women and little children, victims of a system that makes men torture and imprison innocent people. To those who can hear me I say: do not despair.

The misery that is now upon us is but the passing of greed, the bitterness of men who fear the way of human progress. The hate of men will pass and dictators will die, and the power they took from the people will return to the people and so long as men die liberty will never perish.

Soldiers: don't give yourselves to brutes, men who despise you and enslave you, who regiment your lives, tell you what to do, what to think and what to feel, who drill you, diet you, treat you as cattle, as cannon fodder!

Don't give yourselves to these unnatural men,
machine men, with machine minds and machine hearts.

You are not machines!

You are not cattle!

You are men!!

You have the love of humanity in your hearts.

You don't hate, only the unloved hate.

The unloved and the unnatural.

Soldiers: don't fight for slavery, fight for liberty!

In the seventeenth chapter of Saint Luke it is written:

- "The kingdom of God is within man."

Not one man, nor a group of men, but in all men: in you!

You the people have the power, the power to create machines, the power to create happiness. You the people have the power to make this life free and beautiful, to make this life a wonderful adventure.

Then, in the name of democracy, let us use that power, let us all unite!

Let us fight for a new world, a decent world that will give men a chance to work, that will give you the future and old age and security.

By the promise of these things, brutes have risen to power, but they lie. They do not fulfil their promise, they never will. Dictators free themselves but they enslave the people.

Now let us fight to fulfil that promise. Let us fight to free the world, to do away with national barriers, to do away with greed, with hate and intolerance. Let us fight for a world of reason, a world where science and progress will lead to all men's happiness.

Soldiers! In the name of democracy: let us all unite! »