



Political Perspectives

By R. HUTCHINS

Although much has been written in recent months about the ominous prophecies of George Orwell it would be unjustifiable to the author's incredible foresight for people to translate his book *1984* into an approximation of this year, literally.

Orwell's contribution to the literary world is outstanding and his input into political thought immeasurable but his best known work has often been misunderstood as a trusted title and little has been said of his great contributions to society. Orwell was a man of words and as such even when the year "1984" passes his ominous quotations such as War is Peace, Freedom is Slavery and Ignorance is Strength will last as opposites which survive in the warped ideologically split world we live in.

It is obvious that Orwell valued ideals over ideology and as such realized that if man thought longer than he acted "1984" could be avoided. In *The Road to Wigan Pier* he expressed the belief that "economic injustice will stop the moment we want it to stop, and no sooner, and if we genuinely want it to stop the method adopted hardly matters."

Orwell went on in this book to describe ignorance as connected with thinking. Without thinking and using language ignorance will prevail. Orwell wanted to change the world through the use of the "word" and attempted to appeal to human decency by writing. Orwell did not view 1984 as a condemnation of humanity but more as a literary piece to make us think about the possibilities and ironies of an ideologically split world.

One of his most accurate quotations came from a review of Hitler's *Mein Kampf* in 1948 where he described people's "common sense" as being warped by a sensational need for strength.

"the socialist who finds his children playing with soldiers is usually upset, but he is never able to think of a substitute for the tin soldiers; tin pacifists somehow won't do. Hitler, because in his own joyless mind he feels it with exceptional strength, knows that human beings don't only want comfort, safety, short working hours, hygiene, birth control and in general, common sense; they also, at least intermittently, want struggle and self-sacrifice, not to mention drums, flags and loyalty parades."

Such an accurate view of mankind left testament to Hitler's ability to warp man's common-sense and replace it with visions of power and a machiavellian sense of security. Orwell realized, as did Hitler, that the manipulation of speech can be as deadly as the use of weapons.

Now that I have given a background on Orwell's great contributions how does his contribution fit into today?

The ideologically split world we live in follows many of the patterns prophesized by Orwell. In fact, the foreign policy of both the USSR and America toward the Third World could be called "Ignorance is Strength". There is no lack of weapons available to these countries but if they were to shed their "ignorance" they would most surely rise to overthrow the super-power oppressors. By keeping these countries weak and underdeveloped, the continued supremacy of the world's developed nations will persist.

As a final aside 1984 will not see the "thought police" or "thought crimes" in the Orwellian sense but we do have to fear ignorance and total control. If we are to survive, common sense must prevail over ideology, and mankind must realize that maniacs such as Adolf Hitler are awaiting in the wings to take control once more. Although 1984 is the year of Orwell, it should be used to better understand his broader contributions to literary thought.

Victim/Witness Unit Formed

The Victim/Witness Unit is a new police based, community service program which has been created to act as an information clearing house as well as to act as a liaison between the victim, the police and social agencies.

The Unit is organized and staffed by three civilian workers; Laurel Lewey, BSW, Annemarie French, BA/Psych. and Doran Ramsay, BEd. The Program is funded by a one year N.E.E.D. grant, but continued funding is presently being sought. This program was approved by the Fredericton Police Department and the Solicitor General's office.

There are three phases and concerns that the Unit will deal with; services to victims, services to witnesses and eventually a Family Crisis Unit. Services for the victims will include; cleaning and securing of the home after a break in, provide information on police procedures, provide information on the status of investigations, provide information on the Victim Compensation Act, Small Claims Court and Legal Aid, assist in returning property to owner and to provide emotional comfort and counselling.

INFORMATION & ASSISTANCE



The Fredericton Police Dept. provides information and assistance through the VICTIM/WITNESS SERVICE UNIT.

If we can be of service,
please call:

454-9701

REFER TO COMPLAINT NO.

OFFICER NO. _____

Services provided by the Victim/Witness of Service Unit

- Provide information on status of investigation.
- Provide information on the Criminal Justice System and Police procedures.
- Act as liaison between victim and investigating officer.
- Assist in returning of property and securing of home when required.
- Refer victims to Community resources to provide additional assistance.
- Provide services to witnesses, in Justice building.
- Family Crisis Service to provide assistance to families in crisis.

Services to witnesses will include; providing information on both the court and justice system, provide information on witness fees, to help explain subpoena/Summons, provide emotional support and to provide emergency transportation and babysitting.

The services of the Family Crisis Unit will include; crisis counselling and

mediation within 24 hours of a call, provide emotional support to the family when needed and to refer victims of abuse to appropriate agencies.

In general, the Victim/Witness Unit reflects a responsiveness by the Criminal Justice System to the needs of victims of crime. This service unit will augment existing police and community services.



Damage done to washroom at Social Club