

# Is governmental censorship the ultimate way to a totalitarian system?

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Freedom. It is like air, we tend to forget its crucial role in life until it is compromised. Sadly most human beings on earth take nearly everything for granted. When can one really begin to appreciate their countries democratic state and limitations to censorship? The answer is quite simple; it is only until a power of authority removes all that was once known as individual rights and freedoms. George Orwell's 1984 noticeably bolds and underlines the repercussions the citizens face when a totalitarian government dominates Oceania. Nonetheless, it is not easy for one to eliminate a precedent democracy or monarchy. Governmental censorship is fundamental to a totalitarian system as it restricts freedom of speech, thought and expression, it brainwashes the younger generation, and it controls history and media. The inhibition of sovereignty and prerogative to speech, thought, and expression restrains any overt or covert display of personal opinions of the governmental system. Oceania's citizens cannot demonstrate any hatred or even a slight abhorrence towards the Big Brother or the government given that it will result in emotional and physical torture as consequences as seen in Chapter 6. "Your worst enemy, he reflected, was your own nervous system, at any moment the tension inside you was liable to translate itself into some visible symptom. "Winston wrote in his diary and had an overwhelming temptation to shout a string of filthy words at the top of his voice. However having known the consequences of disobeying "law" of silence of ones point of view, he did not do so. Moreover, in the society only one bias attitude and outlook is permitted through thoughts and deeds. Near the end of the story, O'Brien asks Winston what he thinks about Big Brother.

The "right" answer would have been, "I love him", however Winston's answer with "I hate him" (Orwell 295) and O'Brien replies back to his unacceptable response with, "You must love Big Brother. It is not enough to obey him: you must love him." (Orwell 295) Given that this is a totalitarian system, the Party's subjects are restrained from any freedom of voice. Winston's inability to verbally express fictitious feelings of admiration towards someone he loathes so passionately stimulates O'Brien's ambition to cure his so-called "mental disease" by sending him to Room 101, "The worst room in the world" (Orwell 296). If there were any liberty of one's voice to be heard, O'Brien wouldn't have cared about Winston's beliefs and conceptions. This quote shows that O'Brien went to great lengths to fully wash all the "dirty" thoughts in Winston's mind and soul. As a totalitarian system is governed, the Party holds total authority over the society and seeks to control all aspects of public and private life wherever necessary. On the contrary, democratic countries such as Canada perform favourably in education, quality of life, government transparency, and economic and personal freedom. Fortunately for democratic citizens, they can write letters to the government; they are able to express themselves from pen to paper and they are allowed to participate in debates and controversial discussions. On the other hand, Oceania lacks this openness and equality as revealed in the following quote. "The thing that he was about to do was to open a diary. This was not illegal (nothing was illegal, since there were no longer any laws), but if detected it was reasonably certain that it would be punished to death, or at least by twenty-five years in a forced camp." (Orwell 8) Orwell emphasizes the fact that freedom is an alien notion of an unpardonable

crime. The reticence of freedom of speech, thought and expression is not the only practice used for the sustainability of the Party. In addition, kids are brainwashed into being future obedient vassals. Catechizing Oceania's children to be submissive to the Party's commands at a young age aids in the future preservation of the totalitarian way of "living". This psychological manipulation is all done in the selfishness of maintaining absolute power of the people from generation to generation. Here is a piece of evidence confirming techniques of persuasion, involving children, the Party utilizes while targeting the certification of their complete control over the human mind. " All [the children's] ferocity was turned outwards, against the enemies of the state against foreigners, traitors, saboteurs, thought criminals. It was almost normal for people to be frightened of their own children. And with good reason for hardly a week passed by in which The Times did not carry a paragraph describing how some eavesdropping little sneak — ' child hero' was the phrase generally used — had overheard some compromising remark and denounced its Parents to the Thought Police. " (Orwell 27) Children are essentially indoctrinated into being Junior spies for the Party and into reporting any acts of disloyalty towards the Party. Orwell attempts to model this society after infamous types of governments such as Nazi Germany. Orwell was inspired in his creation of the Junior Spies by an organization called Hitler Youth that thrived in Nazi Germany. This group instilled children with fanatic patriotism, causing them to serve a very similar role to Orwell's Junior Spies, including monitoring their parents for any sign of deviation of Nazi orthodoxy. The following quote demonstrates the extreme altering of the children's' minds in order for the Party to continue

being totalitarian for the many years to come. " What was worst of all was that by means of such organizations as the spies they were systematically turned into ungovernable little savages, yet this produced in them no tendency whatever to rebel against the discipline of the Party. On the contrary, they adored the Party and everything connected with it. " (Orwell 21) The Party has basically effectively converted into Junior Spies to believe that, " Thoughtcrime was not a thing that could be concealed forever. " Targeting the younger generation to acquire such delinquent states of minds before the stage of maturity and level of full development an understanding was all apart of the Party's plan. Educating the kids while their brains are most absorbent to information and " clean" to thoughts of revolt, verifies that the future held in the younger generation hands' will have no problem accepting the totalitarian government. After all, " The Party seeks power entirely for its own sake. [They] are not interested in the good of others; [they] are interested solely in power. Not wealth or luxury or long life or happiness: only power, pure power. " (Orwell 275) Furthermore, the Party makes it necessary for the media and historical events to be controlled and edited before reaching out to the public for their own egotistical craving to preserve unlimited power. The society has forgotten about their past and are all in great misery. The general population is living in darkness with their television screens dominating their homes, radios constantly blaring in their ears, and censored newspapers and historical books for the Party's creed. This is a form of making society less knowledgeable and more brainwashed, which is exactly what a totalitarianism governmental system does as described by Orwell. " A totalitarian state is in effect a theocracy, and its

ruling caste, in order to keep its position, has to be thought of as infallible. But since, in practice, no one is infallible, it is frequently necessary to rearrange past events in order to show that this or that mistake was not made, or that this or that imaginary triumph actually happened. " George Orwell has the intellect and brilliance at putting on view that a totalitarian system is centralized, doctrinal and requires complete subservience to the state. The citizens are prepared to obey and agree with Big Brother or any member of the Party or Thought Police unquestioningly. An example of an obedient subject in the story is Mr. Parsons as shown in Part III, Chapter I. After his daughter, a junior spy, ratted him out to the Party for sleep talking " Down with Big Brother" instead of being furious, he declares, "Pretty smart for a nipper of seven, eh? I don't bear her any grudge for it. In fact I'm proud of her. It shows I brought her up in the right spirit, anyway. " (Orwell 245) His reaction is quite strange and unexpected given that his own daughter may be the cause of his torture and death. Oceania's totalitarian government truly messes with people's minds and results in bewildering behaviour for the sake of self-protection. To add on, Winston's job in the book was to " correct" newspapers and other articles that inaccurately depict the current world. If the chocolate ration went down and Big Brother had predicted that it would go up, then obviously history was incorrect and needed to be fixed since Big Brother is never wrong. This was a technique used by the former Soviet Union over a decade ago. Emmanuel Goldstein, the leader of the mysterious Brotherhood, and the enemy of the Party was one of the original leaders of the revolution, but Big Brother soon after exposed him as a traitor and forced him into exile. " Goldstein was delivering his visual venomous

attack upon the doctrines of the party-an attack so exaggerated and perverse that a child should have been able to see through it, and yet just plausible enough to fill one with an alarmed feeling that other people, less level-headed than oneself, might be taken in by it. He was abusing Big Brother, he was denouncing the dictatorship of the party, he was advocating freedom form speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, freedom of thought, he was crying hysterically that the revolution had been betrayed..." (Orwell 14) Goldstein is used as an allegory for the development of Communism. Stalin, the real life Big Brother, also later denounced Leon Trotsky, leader of the red army. Goldstein and Trotsky are both examples of the use of an enemy in media and historical events (though always partly fictional and usually partly factual) as an excuse for oppression. Trotsky criticized Stalin's leadership, arguing that the dictatorship Stalin exercised was based on his own interests, rather than those of the people. This contributes substantially to Trotsky's removal from photographs and history. This act of exclusion is called censorship. Censorship is the suppression of speech or other communication, which may be considered objectionable, harmful, sensitive, or inconvenient to the general body of people as determined by a government, media outlet, or other controlling body. This page is for quotes related to the subject of censorship. This kind of expurgation of past events is used for the Party's advantage in remaining in an endless state of totalitarianism. The extent in media censorship varies on a country-to-country basis. While some countries have little censorship and other countries go as far as to limit the access of information such as news, and suppress discussion among citizens. For instance, Canada uses

censorship for safety & security, copyright, defamation, harassment, and obscene material while North Korea uses it for mind control, brainwashing, and preservation of the tyrannical governmental system. " Censorship reflects a society's lack of confidence in itself. It is a hallmark of an authoritarian regime. " — Potter Stewart, many too believe a society can be truly strong only when it is truly free and vice versa. Hence, Oceania will have to have lack of restrictions for the sake of getting their hands on strength and supremacy. Without doubt, censorship is a prerequisite for a totalitarian system. In conclusion, every single action by the Party, victory or failure, is disguised as a success and blasted into the citizen's minds overwhelming the minds capacity for independent thought and creativity. Additionally, Orwell was a hysteric and believed that only a totalitarian/doctorial government could censor speech, expression and thoughts, condition the younger age group and indefinitely hold power over the people through media and history. Perhaps this is possible for a short time, but realistically, the human spirit cannot be silenced. You can make laws or exercise terror to make people mute, but you cannot make them want to give up their voices. The human heart is strong, resilient and completely recalcitrant. Human beings will continue to instinctively reach forth in order to acquire the collective necessity of freedom just as we try our very hardest to grasp that very last breathe of air. WORKS CITED beautiful, the heat of an urn.... Who knows what, and winged life. " George Orwell was Wrong." The Ethical Spectacle. N. p., n. d. Web. 10 Dec. 2012. <http://www.spectacle.org/496/orwell.html> " Censorship Quotes - BrainyQuote." Famous Quotes at BrainyQuote. N. p., n. d. Web. 16 Dec. 2012.