

“Hope Lies in the Proles”: Tell-tale Notes of Warning in George Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty Four*

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Abstract

An exaggeration of the political climate of the day, the futuristic *Nineteen Eighty-Four* manifests an abundance of Orwell’s genius of framing a political world of rare excellence, and gives the impression of being written to frighten people into a distasteful recognition of the dangers of the present and future. In it, Orwell exemplifies a world where man’s identity is not only *lost* but laboriously *erased* to cripple his sense of individuality, and implicitly directs us to the realization that under such paralysing conditions, the only promise of hope lies not in the hands of the power holders and their pawns, but in the everyman, the working-class citizen or the *prole*- who by their design and partly his own, continues to live unconscious of such oppression and willingly cooperates with his oppressor. The impetus to work on the topic, ‘*The Hope is in the Proles: Tell-tale Notes of Warning in Orwell’s Nineteen Eighty Four*’ came from an arresting realization of the ugly truth captured in the pages of the novel that explores themes of totalitarianism, penetrative state control, mass surveillance, mutability of the past, role of language in sustaining a people, man’s degradation to a mere automaton and the potential power of the working class.

The purpose of this research is to: first, substantiate the hope that Orwell as well as his protagonist Winston claims, lies in the proles, and second, highlight the alarm-raising notes of warning that layer the writing. By analyzing the details of Winston's journey and his fall in principles, the aim is to cast a look at the dystopia as Orwell's attempt to chronicle a future the writer didn't want the world to see come true.

Keywords: Proles, Totalitarianism, Mass Surveillance, State Control, Mutability Of Past, Dystopia.

Introduction

Orwell is known for his unapologetic social criticism, his rigid stance against totalitarianism of the Left or the Right, anti-fascism, and his forthright support of democratic socialism. An observer of the life of the poor, he was one of those method writers who went seeking experiences so they could use it as their reservoir for writing. He led a nomadic work life, doing whichever job suited him or was well enough to land. He was, for the initial days of his working life, an Imperial Police Officer at Burma, then, a book-reviewer, a critic, a writer who kept getting rejected by publishers, a tutor, a teacher, an assistant in a bookshop, a columnist, and even a soldier at the Spanish Civil War.

They say the best in Orwell is the essayist; it is the skill of the essayist that favourably extends to his fiction, empowers it with details and thoroughness, and gives mass to the world he seeks to build. Although Orwell made a name for himself in every genre of writing that he explored, his fame as a novelist is lasted by his two most notable works, *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, of which the latter is our subject.

Orwell portrays a bleak world in his work with a convincing pessimism; but in his defense, E.M. Foster writes that Orwell 'tried to ameliorate a world which is bound to be

unhappy.’ In his most remarkable novel, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Orwell intends to act as a voice of warning, making people aware of their social responsibility and their capacity to deal with political problems. In it, he outlines the bizarrely controlled world of Oceania, where a totalitarian party, INGSOC headed by the all-pervading symbolic head of the party, Big Brother squelches individual identity and creative voices through mass surveillance, repressive regimentation and manipulation of the past as well as the present, effectively validating that:

“‘Who controls the past,(...)controls the future: who controls the present controls the past’” (Orwell 37).

The protagonist is a member of the Outer-party and a secret dissident named Winston Smith, who, in his very bones, wishes to start a revolution against the party. His nemesis is O’Brien, an Inner-party member whom he mistakes for an ally, and eventually, gets ambushed by. During the journey, Winston pursues a romance with Julia, yet another outer-party member working at the Fiction Department and for the Anti-sex league. Julia is a rebel too, but her rebellion is more outward and superficial than idealistic and practical. The book scales Winston’s reflections on the possibility of an overthrow, his cursory and amateurish attempts of joining the Brotherhood to revolt against the party that, he is deeply aware, are doomed to failure and his unplumbed hope that, he keeps on reiterating, lies in the proles.

Proles, in the totalitarian world that Orwell builds, are no more than mere animals to the party. But, in that assumption, the author as well as the protagonist detects, possibly, the only anomaly in an otherwise perfect exertion of control over the party’s ‘subjects.’ Given the horrifying circumstances that legitimise the dynamics of terror and our past which has seen totalitarian governments rising to immense power and popularity, be it Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy or Communist Soviet Union, the responsibility of the people as individuals and as citizens become critical- the proles become the only source of hope. The purpose of this

work of research will be to explain from Winston's vantage point how such an oblivious bunch of people send out, possibly, the only hope of revolution, and to understand the story as a narrative seeped in warnings for us to take with utmost seriousness.

Orwell's Hope in the Proletarian and Warnings about Totalitarianism

In an essay titled *Towards European Unity* written in 1947 while he was still working on *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, he predicts the future possibilities for the world. These entailed a future rife with different forms of war, and the one ensuring the most stable form of survival was when the fear of damage caused by atomic bombs would be so great that everyone will refrain from their use, the world would be divided into two or three super-states waging phoney wars at each other to sustain power and check internal revolution. Conquest, for its dangers, would be kept at bay. But he theorises that the best possibility for preventing the creation of such a horrific world "carved up among three totalitarian regimes" is for a major area of the world such as Europe to establish *democratic socialism* on firm footing. Malcolm R. Thorp describes that Orwell was strict adherent of this ideology which he believed would-

"...not only offer the world a model for a human future but also act as a bulwark against the tendencies towards totalitarianism"(Thorp7).

Orwell's political leanings profess his loyalty to the working-class and his faith in immense power of the workers to protect the world against the political ills of the present as well as the future. He joined the Spanish Civil War within a year of his own marriage because of his concern about the rise of a Fascist leader, and he became a member the POUM (The Workers' Party of Marxist Unification) because he identified with the ideology of the party the best. By the time he came back, he was washed clean of the 'Soviet Myth' and called Communism nothing better than "a counter-revolutionary force" and "the revolution of the deracinated."

The atmosphere of Spain stayed with him life-long and became the inspiration to write about the gruesome reality he witnessed there. In the preface to the Ukrainian version of *Animal Farm*, Orwell writes of his escape with his wife when the Communists gained control of the Spanish government and began their manhunt for the members of the POUM:

“These man-hunts in Spain went on at the same time as the great purges of in the USSR and were a sort of supplement to them (...) it taught me how easily totalitarian propaganda can control the opinion of enlightened people in democratic countries” (*Kolhosp tvaryn 3*).¹

Orwell’s ‘hope in the proles’ also springs from personal experience and a fine allegory he derived upon seeing a little boy driving a huge cart-horse whipping it whenever it tried to turn. It made him realise that if such animals could ever be made to realise their strength, humans would have no power over them, and that the act of men exploiting animals was equivalent to the powerful exploiting the powerless and the rich exploiting the proletariat. We see this analogy take shape extensively in *Animal Farm* and narrowly, in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* where he declares the party’s slogan: ‘Proles and animals are free’ (Orwell 75).

The Orwellian fictional situation is more often a social service than simply the creative output of a detail-oriented and imaginative novelist. When Orwell wrote *Animal Farm* or *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, all he intended was to warn people of the evils of being over-invested in an extremist ideology to the extent that all questioning and counter-examining of the authority ceases, for that is the design of a totalitarian beginning. But should such a system come into being, is a revolution to release oneself from the tyranny of government really possible? If so, where will the impetus come from, and from whom?

¹*Kolhosp tvaryn*: kazkais the Ukrainian edition of Orwell’s *Animal Farm* by Ihor Szewczenko

In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Winston Smith is terribly dissatisfied with the party he is working for, and wants to find a source to raise a rebellion. His rebellion surfaces through the occasional outburst of his private thoughts in a diary, a secret romantic pursuit with another outer-party member Julia, and then, an unwitting commitment in front of O'Brien to work for the Brotherhood so as to overthrow the party - actions that are heavily condemned and severely culpable by the party. Absolute control and domination, interference by an authoritarian government and dictation of the codes by which one is expected to conduct oneself are not entirely unfamiliar. In a secular 21st century India, an authoritarian government limits even the food choices of its people. Winston's desperate acts of rebellion corroborate a sensible man's exasperation with the party ideals and push the reader to penetrate the varying techniques of exploitation employed by the party that would call for such desperate measures, in the first place. However, tracing Winston's fears of being caught throughout the novel, one would be acutely aware of his pessimism and the utter absence of conviction in his own rebellion. Intrinsicly and implicitly, he prophesies his own failure; the failure of anyone within the party's surveillance wouldn't be any different. Thus, it is inconceivable that the party can be overthrown from within. Revolution needs men to plot, to come together and discuss the means of executing it; that is not possible under the constant surveillance of telescreens and the Thought Police.

"Its enemies, if it had any enemies, had no way of coming together or even of identifying one another. Even if the legendary Brotherhood existed, as just possibly it might, it was inconceivable that its members could ever assemble in larger numbers than twos or threes"(72).

Lest one should be too presumptuous about the pure pessimism of the writing, it must be brought to the fore that Winston also believes that should there be a light at the end of the tunnel, it will only be a prole bearing that torch. In the novel, the Proles are described as

'swarming disregarded masses' forming about eighty five percent of Oceania, who are dismissed by the Party as mere animals, a people with no purpose other than slaving, eating and sleeping. Living under such conditions of paralysed freedom, with no hope of better, Winston analyses that in the otherwise perfect rule of the party, its perfect tactics to maintain its hegemony and ensure that it held power eternally, the only discrepancy lay in its underestimation of the power of the working class. The party had kept the working class quiet and soaked in the miseries of a meaningless hand-to-mouth existence. They ensured that the proles weren't as educated as the party members while feeding them misinformation about an increasing rate of literacy among them to forge their satisfaction. The party also ensured that the proles always felt grateful about having enough to eat despite the wars, which were phoney and a nuisance created only to generate a false deficit, so people credited the party for having done away with the miserable days of capitalism. In truth, life was fundamentally the same or rather worse, but the Party told them that their lives were much better than before and they willingly believed it. No matter how deep their obliviousness or how practiced their gullibility, Winston had a strong sense of conviction that a better future could only come through the proles. He had his reasons. Winston's first entry in his diary describes the night of movies. The scenes are violent and gory, showing a lifeboat of children being blown to smithereens, and a child's arm going right up in the air. Winston describes the victorious applause it receives from the party seats, and in stark contrast to their reaction, a righteous prole woman voices her contempt about such scenes being inappropriate for children. The takeaway from this episode is later expressed by Winston himself in a conversation with Julia:

“‘The proles are human beings,’ he said aloud. ‘We are not human’” (173).

David Morgan Zehr makes a note of Orwell's obsession with the proles' inherent virtuosity and an unforged sense of morality that were retained despite the degeneracy of the

times. This stems from Orwell's experiences in Spain where he witnessed a people united by a revolutionary spirit against Fascism, and more so, by a *common human decency*. It is true that the Spanish Revolution didn't fare well, but neither did the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 in India. But what it did do is awake a sleeping country to her immense power, made her people believe in the platitude of "united we stand, divided we fall,"busted the myth of her oppressor's invincibility and infallibility, and eventually paved the path for independence.

In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the proles are a close-knit people governed by unquestionable private loyalties to one another. In the real world, working classes are united by the common struggle to survive, their loyalties are dependably fierce. Juxtaposing them against party members, Orwell warns us of a possibility of our dehumanization and internal decay at the hands of an authoritarian power who might selfishly pursue every means to divorce us from our soul. Reflectively, Winston notes the edge the proles have over the others:

"They were not loyal to a party or a country or an idea, they were loyal to one another" (172).

Resigned to poverty, the proles are bought-off with pornography, salacious novels generated to benumb their senses, rigged lotteries and a humdrum routine. Therefore, Winston perceives the proles to be blessed with agency, but lacking in direction that sprung from a simple lack of consciousness. He marks that:

"Until they become conscious they will never rebel, and until after they have rebelled they cannot become conscious"(74).

To predict about the collective consciousness of a huge mass of people is rather presumptuous, but to say that change is inevitable is not. Given the freedom that proles enjoy, change is imminent and approaching.

Orwell also warns us of the extent to which the authority or the totalitarian government can penetrate our lives and our most intimate spaces. Party members are always surrounded by telescreens that zoom in on them, pick up the faintest of whispers, receive and transmit at the same time. No moment is private. Not only that, to effectively sustain its rule for the years to come, the party ensures its ideology penetrates the family lives of the members. Therefore, the children are indoctrinated and manipulated to hold the ideals of the party above their familial bond. This is not wholly imagined or far-fetched, for there existed in Nazi Germany, a similar organization by the name of Hitler Youth, which comprised of children indoctrinated with a fanatic patriotism by virtue of which they did not even spare their parents for deviation from Nazi orthodoxy. This renders Orwell's fiction not wholly fictitious, but layered with details of a 'nightmare-world' evoking an atmosphere of palpable fear that might become a reality if people don't take the warnings seriously enough.

However, most of the prole households did not have telescreens. The party was positive that in those awfully ignorant masses, the possibility of revolution is faint. Let alone children, none of the proles needed to be indoctrinated with the party's ideals, for it was undesirable to have proles with strong political opinions. This seemingly sly move on part of the party leaves the proles to their devices, with no fear of being betrayed by their own families or fellows.

The party invaded not just one's personal space, but one's personal choices too. Party members were not allowed to make sex a pleasurable experience; it would only exist between married couples as a necessity to beget children-a duty to the party. Julia explains why it was in the party's interest to take all the joy out of sex:

When you make love, you're using up energy; and afterwards you feel happy and don't give a damn for anything. They can't bear you to feel like that. They want you to be bursting with energy all the time. All this marching up and down and cheering and waving

flags is simply sex gone sour. If you're happy inside yourself, why should you get excited about Big Brother and the Three- Year Plans and the Two Minutes Hate and all the rest of their bloody rot? (139).

The hysteria induced by sexual privation was desirable by the party only so it could be effectively transformed into war-fever and leader-worship like in the Two Minutes Hate session. Besides, wringing out all the pleasure out of sex detaches man from his human side, makes him more of a corpse performing a duty, and deadens his spirit while his body is clueless as to what end should that surplus energy be spent. However, the proles were not imposed on with any such rule- so they still remained free, and in touch with their human side.

Apart from mass surveillance, disheveling the family unit, encroaching upon members' privacy, party employs other effective methods to rule out chances of future revolution. One such tool is language. Sapir-Whorf hypothesis states that structure of language determines speaker's perception and categorization of experience. The party aims at eradicating the use of language as it is known and wishes to bring to effect a new language that would limit vocabulary and narrow the range of thought and consciousness, making 'Thoughtcrime' impossible. In real life as well, we are witnesses to the constant manipulation of language to distort discourse in almost irreparable ways. Therefore, Orwell's warning to safeguard as well as reflect on the way we use language rings in our ears. During a conversation with Winston, one of the experts compiling the Newspeak Dictionary, Syme asserts that by 2050, no human being would understand the language they're using now. Winston in his heart knows that only the proles would remain immune to that change. A people without the power to express themselves have no power at all, and their powerlessness is absolute. Thus, imposition of Newspeak would render the future of the party members bleak. However, the same cannot be said for the proles. Through exclusion, the party that

undermines their strength gives them power by sparing their language, and ironically enough, sustains the hope that Winston keeps on reiterating, lies in the proles.

The party assumes the revolutionary impetus in the proles to be absent. But to the optimistic reader, the permanence of the status quo assumed by the party seems rather overconfident. A mass as enormous as the proles is comprised of individuals who have retained their humanity, uniqueness of thought and fellow-feeling, and surely cannot be expected to follow the party-specified code of living for eternity. There is no dispute in saying that free thinking is as much a blessing as a boon. While by virtue of what it is, it does tend to divide people; it also gives man the power to wield his thoughts as he perceives his surroundings, it riles up debate and discussion which are its positives. Orwell's allegiance from the beginning has been with Democratic Socialism. Let alone being unstable and unreliable, democracy without free thinking- just because it threatens absolute unity and does away with unquestioning conformity- is simply unachievable.

The greatest weapon used by the party to maintain control over the people is fear. A case of consequential non-conformity in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is the arrest and execution of Jones, Aaronson and Rutherford as enemies of the party. Winston summons into mind the memory of a photograph on his desk that proved their innocence, and bared the lies of the party, as it was clear that the three of them had been forced to confess to crimes that they had never committed. Their fates were recorded in the Party history as a warning to posterity. Like a prophetic voice of the day, Orwell warns us of such mechanisms operating around us and the threat abounding in their dictum of 'oblige or...' The party members had no option but to adhere to the norms of conformity, but the proles in their awfully large numbers couldn't be endlessly blackmailed of defamation or purges.

The proles pose a logistic issue: an issue of mere composition. But their number is indeed a huge handicap for the party. Their number gives volume to their strength, rendering

their eternal suppression impossible. But it is not merely the logistics that guarantee a revolution. The proles chiefly matter because of the freedom they enjoy of creating discourse through a free language and relatively ungoverned lifestyle the privacy of which isn't encroached upon by authorities, as well as their habitual goodness.

Orwell was deeply perturbed by the falsification of facts at the hands of those trusted to uphold their sanctity. During 1936-37, while serving in the Spanish Civil War, Orwell was baffled by the whirlwind of lies, hypocrisy and the hostility of the left-wing press, and lamented such degeneration. This lamentation finds expression in his design of the political atmosphere of Oceania. In his essay, he writes:

“This kind of thing is frightening to me, because (...) the very concept of objective truth is fading out of the world”(“Looking Back” 235).¹²

The world of Oceania was a world of well-designed misrepresentation. All news was merely propaganda. All records were forever mutating to fit the party's changing claims. The party manipulated records of production, consumption, literacy rate, people's existence, wars and everything else that there was to manipulate. All previous data that contradicted the party's claims were erased and made to seem like they had never existed in the first place. Nothing was sacred. But the party members accepted the changes mindlessly, and the proles never paid much attention. Here, Orwell's warning to people about the dangers of taking disseminated information at their face value was not a slander on any particular ideology. Much like his protagonist, Orwell believed that too much power at the hands of a few skillful people led to such imbalance, and that neither extremes of the political spectrum could be exempted of this guilt. Of his experiences in the Spanish Civil War, where the Left was

² Looking Back – “Looking Back on the Spanish War” is an essay culled from *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell* published in 1968.

falling apart because of acute disunity and the Communist-press attacked the POUM (of which Orwell was a member) of conspiring with the Fascists, Orwell writes:

“One of the dreariest effects of this war has been to teach me that the Left-wing press is every bit as spurious and dishonest as that of the Right”(Homage 64).

The propagandist world of Oceania did more than just manipulate records- it manipulated people's psyches. The party compulsorily made its members a part of Two Minutes Hate session inspired by rallies during Stalinist period, where they revived hate for Emmanuel Goldstein, the party's archenemy, the enemies of Oceania and hailed Big Brother. In fact, by addressing the party's symbolic head as Big Brother, what is attempted is truly to forge a sense of family loyalty by language manipulation, meanwhile disrupting the real ties between families. The party also made members follow a dreary routine of physical exercise called The Physical Jerks through telescreen dictation, so the idea of independence even in the most trivial things isn't nurtured, and members feel as if they're contributing to the party by participating. Moreover, Pornosec, the fiction department of the Ministry of Truth churned out salacious novels to distract the Proles from real matters that impact them from one day to another. This is not wholly unfamiliar, for we see even today, how the media bodies who act as pawns of the Government broadcast news that's barely true, are responsible for distorting social and political discourse, and sowing the seeds of intolerance to wage a war that distracts the people from serious and important matters of the day. Orwell warns us against these subtle forms of manipulation and exploitation, which the world is guilty of till this day.

Towards the end of Part II of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Winston's fascination with the prole washerwoman transforms her into a symbol of the proletariat resilience and freedom. Her singing seems to him as free as that of the thrush whose melody he envied at the countryside. The bird's song becomes an expression of creativity too, driving home the

realization that creativity necessitates freedom, and only the proles have a certain degree of it. Describing the thrush's creative expression, Orwell writes-

“The music went on and on, minute after minute, with astonishing variations, never once repeating itself, almost as though the bird were deliberately showing off its virtuosity”(130).

He concludes that while the party was lifeless and promoted lifelessness, defiance personified in the thrush's song and that of the prole washerwoman becomes the hope by which one looks to the future:

“The birds sang, the proles sang, the Party did not sing”(230).

But the image of freedom and expression, that of a hopeful future becomes almost larger than life when the prole washerwoman and the thrush are compared in their abounding carefreeness. Orwell asserts that the present couldn't be saved and that they were 'the dead' while the future belonged to the workers who will have raised their voices and rebelled against the oppressive measures of the party one day:

The proles were immortal, you could not doubt it when you looked at that valiant figure in the yard. In the end their awakening would come. And until that happened, though it might be a thousand years, they would stay alive against all the odds, like birds, passing on from body to body the vitality which the Party did not share and could not kill(229).

In the novel, after Winston had been captured along with Julia, and O'Brien was torturing Winston to defeat his objective reasoning and make him accept the party's ideals with conviction, he discredited Winston's hope that proles will one day overthrow the party:

We control life, Winston, at all its levels. You are imagining that there is something called human nature which will be outraged by what we do and will turn against us. But we create human nature. Men are infinitely malleable. Or perhaps you have returned

to your old idea that the proletarians or the slaves will arise and overthrow us. Put it out of your mind. They are helpless, like the animals. Humanity is the Party. The others are outside-irrelevant (282).

O'Brien claims that the party creates human nature, and that the malleability of men will render them merciless at their hands. But the party, having willfully excluded the proletarians from their wielding schemes, will never have absolute power over proles that it does over the members: it has, of its own accord, *opted out* of creating their nature, not that it could.

O'Brien breaks down the party's ideal of disrupting the family unit, for which we find the answer in Hannah Arendt's claim in 'The Origins of Totalitarianism.' O'Brien tells Winston during his torture:

"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"(280).

Arendt posits that the defining condition of totalitarianism and the common ground for all terror is loneliness flanked by isolation and solitude. She cites the examples of slaves and the subjects of modern totalitarian states who aren't alone, but are definitely isolated and lonely. The ability to act together with others defines one's political powers; isolation strips people of that power, while the sense of uprootedness leads to the slow decay of one's common sense, and thus prepares the breeding ground of totalitarian rule. In Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the proles inspire hope, for they were still loyal to each other, and were still capable of acting as a community. Meanwhile, readers may read the warnings in between the lines against growing patterns of isolation prevalent in 20th century which was doomed to get worse and pave the path for totalitarian rule.

Orwell also highlights the party's brutally exhaustive methods to make a convert out of a non-conformist. In his article, Thorp lucidly describes how terror in the book is not limited to outward subjugation; it goes way beyond beating people into submission:

The essence of the new despotism of 1984 is the use of subtle means of manipulating perceptions of reality. Terror involves mind control (...) The Party determines what is truth. An explicitly behaviorist assumption of the book is that by controlling the environment, especially perceptions that are fed into the mind, the Party can make people believe anything it wants them to (Thorp10-11)

As Winston was captured and tortured at the Ministry of Love, O'Brien explained to him how pure power was the true end that the party sought through all other means, and to achieve it, the party made sure that the members did not just put up a show of outward conformity, or mindless submission; they must discard the actual ability to discern the objective from the abstract, the truth from the lie, the logical from the illogical and ultimately, in the words of O'Brien:

"You must love Big Brother. It's not enough to obey him; you must love him" (Orwell295).

Winston's fall after betraying his love for Julia elucidates the finality of his defeat through his enslaved mind; but was an alternate future ever possible for him? The dystopia is true as long as it concerns Winston, the party members certainly were 'the dead' as asserted repeatedly. But one may summon the theory of the survival of proles to mind on account of Winston's own prophetic claim that the place where the pall of darkness is lifted by the light of wisdom and freedom is one that is emancipated by the proles, whose minds are still free at the end of the novel. The thorough, exhaustive process O'Brien adopts to transform Winston into a 'mindless puppet' may have been successful, but it also has a silver lining: it may be irrefutable but it certainly isn't possible to drown the voices of the vast majority of proles that

inhabited Oceania by those methods. Nor was it possible to zoom in on the life of every prole like the party did with its members. Dissidents *could* go unidentified for just enough time for the seeds of rebellion to be sown.

Ambition is a natural chain. A people cannot be convinced eternally that war is perpetual, and peace an impossibility. In the recent times, we saw migrant workers of India shocked out of their passivity when a pandemic overturned their lives and set them on foot homeward; their ‘unquestionable’ faith in the government was shaken. We bear witness to the facts that not all things can be controlled by a party, and in extraordinary situations, even the most powerful are rendered defenseless. Although India is a democracy, it mustn’t be forgotten that even in a democracy, the totalitarian boot keeps on stamping the human face, and traces of oppression can be seen existing in more subtle ways.

Moreover, political philosopher Hobbes disagrees with O’Brien’s assertion about the party seeking pure power. The former believes that pure power is unattainable so long as human beings remain human, and that it is impossible to guard every single person to protect power as “*men do not act in uniform patterns*” (italics mine). Thus, a glimmer of hope exists that the future might produce a more capable dissident than Winston Smith. True to Winston’s remark, if it be thousands of years, so be it.

Conclusion

Dystopian literature is remarkable for its rejection of all hopes. Precisely that quality makes *Nineteen Eighty-Four* singular for its unpursued hope in the proles. Through an analysis of the intricate elements of the story, we find that Orwell limits the dystopia to the fate of the party members, and leaves a window of promise open for the proles. It can be conclusively said that the novel brims with warnings because it is more realistic than fantastic, and intensifies the actuality of the present. We continue to inhabit a world where

the fine line between privacy of our ‘ownlives’ and the part of it we choose to make public is as good as blurred. What differentiates the fictitious world of Oceania from our real world is imposition and choice- a choice which we often make overlooking the privacy policies of our social media accounts. John Green notes that while Winston *can't* turn off his telescreen, many of us *choose not to* today, thereby exposing parts of our lives to surveillance.

While the limitation of this work lies in the fact that there may be no way to precisely predict the action of the proles beyond the scope of the book, it would certainly not be outrageous to conceive that when the proles of Oceania get tired of their lives in the gutters, a deep sense of dissatisfaction *widely sensed* by these people would be enough to undermine the authority of the party and one day, hopefully, overthrow it. From our understanding of the novel, it may be safe to say that no government assumes power to relinquish it one day. Therefore, no matter which patch of land we inhabit in the world, the fears delineated in the novel are real and the terror of totalitarianism looms over our lives while casting a shadow of uncertainty on the true sense of freedom. Thus *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is Orwell's final warning to the world, a shout-out to the proles inhabiting the world- whatever different definitions may they assume in the real world- to take urgent notice of these warnings and strive to do away with their political obliviousness and to make the world a better, more free and more tolerant place to live in.

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