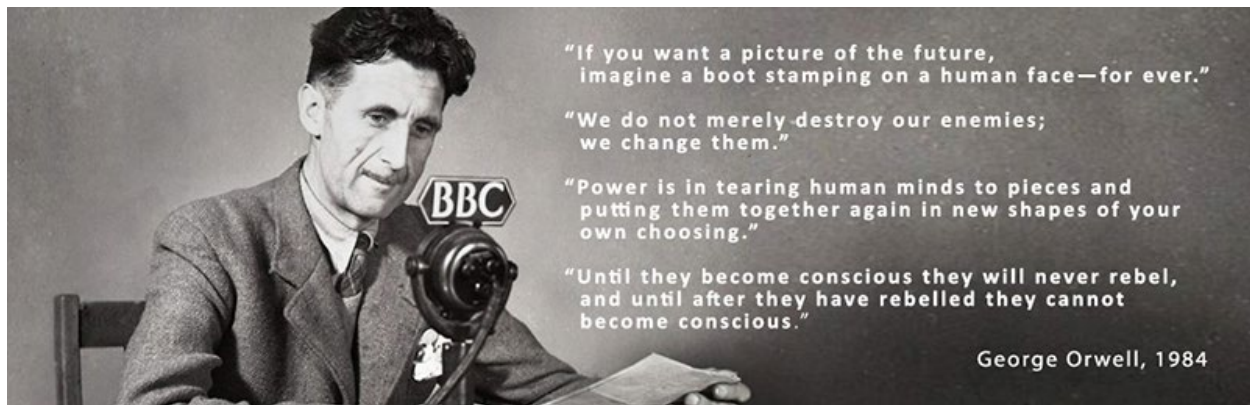


George ended his invisible whisper:

He was back in the Ministry of Love, with everything forgiven, his soul white as snow. He was in the public dock, confessing everything, implicating everybody. He was walking down the white-tiled corridor, with the feeling of walking in sunlight, and an armed guard at his back. The long hoped for bullet was entering his brain. He gazed up at the enormous face. Forty years it had taken him to learn what kind of smile was hidden beneath the dark moustache. O cruel, needless misunderstanding! O stubborn, self-willed exile from the loving breast! Two gin-scented tears trickled down the sides of his nose. But it was all right, everything was all right, the struggle was finished. He had won the victory over himself. He loved Big Brother.

After a long silence, I whispered back. It was a chilling observation my friend and colleague Joseph Chilton Pearce had shared; “Entire capacities can be lost in a single generation, and the newer will never know what they have lost.”

To my astonishment Orwell in his deshelled sweater, appeared again, sitting closely on the bench. “Exactly,” he said.



“The entire design is not to merely destroy our enemies. We change them, by tearing human minds to pieces and putting them together again in new shapes of our choosing,” he said. “And we do that by altering how language, media and propaganda, including compulsory schooling and entertainment, are used. Those who control the present control the future.”

George pulled out a few crumpled sheets of paper. Set them on the bench. Tipped his hat. And I have never seen him again. Picking up his papers, they read: Appendix Newspeak.

Newspeak was the official language. It had been devised to meet the ideological needs of Ingsoc, or English Socialism. In the year 1984 there was not as yet anyone who used Newspeak as his sole means of communication, either in speech or writing. It was expected that Newspeak would finally supersede Oldspeak (or Standard English, as we should call it) by about the year 2050.

The purpose of Newspeak was not only to provide a medium of expression for the world-view and mental habits proper to the devotees of Ingsoc, but to make all other modes of thought impossible. It was intended that when Newspeak had been adopted once and for all and Oldspeak forgotten, a heretical thought — that is, a thought diverging from the principles of Ingsoc— should be literally unthinkable.

Its vocabulary was so constructed as to give exact and often very subtle expression to every meaning that a devotee could properly wish to express, while excluding all other meanings and also the possibility of arriving at them by indirect methods. This was done partly by the invention of new words, but chiefly by eliminating undesirable words and by stripping such words as remained of unorthodox meanings, and so far as possible of all secondary meanings whatever.

In 2019+ and even before, new words were invented; AIDS and COVID, for example, and the definitions of existing words altered, such as infectious, case, (PCR) test, and pandemic. Propaganda was used to

spread Oldspeak, while the new meaning meant something quite different from the original, resulting in mass confusion by design.

The word FREE still existed in Newspeak, but it could only be used in such statements as 'This dog is free from lice' or 'This field is free from weeds'. It could not be used in its old sense of 'politically free' or 'intellectually free' since political and intellectual freedom no longer existed even as concepts, and were therefore of necessity nameless. Quite apart from the suppression of definitely heretical words, reduction of vocabulary was regarded as an end in itself, and no word that could be dispensed with was allowed to survive. Newspeak was designed not to extend but to DIMINISH the range of thought, and this purpose was indirectly assisted by cutting the choice of words down to a minimum.

Newspeak was founded on the English language as we now know it, though many Newspeak sentences, even when not containing newly-created words, would be barely intelligible to an English-speaker of our own day. Newspeak words were divided into three distinct classes, known as the A vocabulary, the B vocabulary (also called compound words), and the C vocabulary.

The A vocabulary consisted of the words needed for the business of everyday life— for such things as eating, drinking, working, putting on one's clothes, going up and down stairs, riding in vehicles, gardening, cooking, and the like. It was composed almost entirely of words that we already possess words like HIT, RUN, DOG, TREE, SUGAR, HOUSE, FIELD—but in comparison with the present-day English vocabulary their number was extremely small, while their meanings were far more rigidly defined. All ambiguities and shades of meaning had been purged out of them. So far as it could be achieved, a Newspeak word of this class was simply a staccato sound expressing ONE clearly understood concept. It would have been quite impossible to use the A vocabulary for literary purposes or for political or philosophical discussion.

The B vocabulary consisted of words which had been deliberately constructed for political purposes: words, that is to say, which not only had in every case a political implication, but were intended to impose a desirable mental attitude upon the person using them. The greatest difficulty facing the compilers of the Newspeak Dictionary was not to invent new words, but, having invented them, to make sure what they meant: to make sure, that is to say, what ranges of words they cancelled by their existence. As we have already seen in the case of the word FREE, words which had once borne a heretical meaning were sometimes retained for the sake of convenience, but only with the undesirable meanings purged out of them. Countless other words such as HONOUR, JUSTICE, MORALITY, INTERNATIONALISM, DEMOCRACY, SCIENCE, and RELIGION had simply ceased to exist.

What was required was an outlook similar to that of the ancient Hebrew who knew, without knowing much else, that all nations other than his own worshipped 'false gods'. He did not need to know that these gods were called Baal, Osiris, Moloch, Ashtaroth, and the like: probably the less he knew about them the better for his orthodoxy. He knew Jehovah and the commandments of Jehovah: he knew, therefore, that all gods with other names or other attributes were false gods. In somewhat the same way, the party member knew what constituted right conduct, and in exceedingly vague, generalized terms he knew what kinds of departure from it were possible. His sexual life, for example, was entirely regulated by the two Newspeak words SEXCRIME (sexual immorality) and GOODSEX (chastity). SEXCRIME covered all sexual misdeeds whatever. It covered fornication, adultery, homosexuality, and other perversions, and, in addition, normal intercourse practiced for its own sake. There was no need to enumerate them separately, since they were all equally culpable, and, in principle, all punishable by death.

In the C vocabulary, which consisted of scientific and technical words, it might be necessary to give specialized names to certain sexual aberrations, but the ordinary citizen had no need of them. He knew what was meant by GOODSEX— that is to say, normal intercourse between man and wife, for the sole purpose of begetting children, and without physical pleasure on the part of the woman: all else was SEXCRIME. In Newspeak it was seldom possible to follow a heretical thought further than the perception that it WAS heretical: beyond that point the necessary words were nonexistent.

No word in the B vocabulary was ideologically neutral. A great many were euphemisms. Such words, for instance, as JOYCAMP (forced labor camp) or MINIPAX (Ministry of Peace, i.e. Ministry of War) meant almost the exact opposite of what they appeared to mean. Some words, on the other hand, displayed a frank and contemptuous understanding of the real nature of society, i.e. Fake News. **An example was PROLEFEED, meaning the rubbishy entertainment and spurious news which the Party handed out to the masses.**

So far as it could be contrived, everything that had or might have political significance of any kind was fitted into the B vocabulary. The name of every organization, or body of people, or doctrine, or country, or institution, or public building, was invariably cut down into the familiar shape; that is, a single easily pronounced word with the smallest number of syllables that would preserve the original derivation. In the Ministry of Truth, for example, the Records Department, in which Winston Smith worked, was called RECDEP, the Fiction Department was called FICDEP, the Teleprogrammes Department was called TELEDEP, and so on. This was not done solely with the object of saving time.

In Newspeak, euphony (agreeable sound, especially in the phonetic quality of words), outweighed every consideration other than exactitude of meaning. Regularity of grammar was always sacrificed to the right sound when it seemed necessary. And rightly so, since what was required, above all for political purposes, was short clipped words of unmistakable meaning which could be uttered rapidly and which roused the minimum of echoes in the speaker's mind.

The words of the B vocabulary even gained in force from the fact that nearly all of them were very much alike. The use of them encouraged a gabbling style of speech, at once staccato and monotonous. And this was exactly what was aimed at. The intention was to make speech, and especially speech on any subject not ideologically neutral, as nearly as possible independent of consciousness.

A member called upon to make a political or ethical judgement should be able to spray forth the correct opinions as automatically as a machine gun spraying forth bullets. His training fitted him to do this, the language gave him an almost foolproof instrument, and the texture of the words, with their harsh sound and a certain wilfulugliness which was in accord with the spirit of Ingsoc, assisted the process still further.

Relative to our own, the Newspeak vocabulary was tiny, and new ways of reducing it were constantly being devised. Newspeak, indeed, differed from most all other languages in that its vocabulary grew smaller instead of larger every year. Each reduction was a gain, since the smaller the area of choice, the smaller the temptation to take thought. Ultimately it was hoped to make articulate speech issue from the larynx without involving the higher brain centers at all.

This aim was frankly admitted in the Newspeak word DUCKSPEAK, meaning 'to quack like a duck'. Like various other words in the B vocabulary, DUCKSPEAK was ambivalent in meaning. Provided that the opinions which were quacked out were orthodox ones, it implied nothing but praise, and when 'The Times' referred to one of the orators of the Party as a DOUBLEPLUSGOOD DUCKSPEAKER it was paying a warm and valued compliment.

From the foregoing account it will be seen that in Newspeak the expression of unorthodox opinions, above a very low level, was well-nigh impossible. In 1984, when Oldspeak was still the normal means of communication, the danger theoretically existed that in using Newspeak words one might remember their original meanings. In practice it was not difficult for any person well grounded in DOUBLETHINK to avoid doing this, but within a couple of generations even the possibility of such a lapse would have vanished.

A person growing up with Newspeak as his sole language would no more know that EQUAL had once had the secondary meaning of 'politically equal', or that FREE had once meant 'intellectually free', than for instance, a person who had never heard of chess would be aware of the secondary meanings attaching to QUEEN and ROOK. And it was to be foreseen that with the passage of time the distinguishing characteristics of Newspeak would become more and more pronounced—its words growing fewer and fewer, their meanings more and more rigid, and the chance of putting them to improper uses always diminishing.

It was impossible to translate any passage of Oldspeak into Newspeak unless it either referred to some technical process or some very simple everyday action, or was already orthodox (GOODTHINKFUL would be the Newspeak expression) in tendency. In practice this meant that no book written before approximately 1960 could be translated as a whole. Pre-revolutionary literature could only be subjected to ideological translation— that is, alteration in sense as well as language. Take for example the well-known passage from the Declaration of Independence:

WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS TO BE SELFEVIDENT, THAT ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL, THAT THEY ARE ENDOWED BY THEIR CREATOR WITH CERTAIN INALIENABLE RIGHTS, THAT AMONG THESE ARE LIFE, LIBERTY, AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS. THAT TO SECURE THESE RIGHTS, GOVERNMENTS ARE INSTITUTED AMONG MEN, DERIVING THEIR POWERS FROM THE CONSENT OF THE GOVERNED. THAT WHENEVER ANY FORM OF GOVERNMENT BECOMES DESTRUCTIVE OF THOSE ENDS, IT IS THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE TO ALTER OR ABOLISH IT, AND TO INSTITUTE NEW GOVERNMENT...

It would have been quite impossible to render this into Newspeak while keeping to the sense of the original. The nearest one could come to doing so would be to swallow the whole passage up in the single word CRIMETHINK. A full translation could only be an ideological translation, whereby Jefferson's words would be changed into a panegyric on absolute government.

A good deal of the literature of the past was, indeed, already being transformed in this way. Considerations of prestige made it desirable to preserve the memory of certain historical figures, while at the same time bringing their achievements into line with the philosophy of Ingsoc. Various writers, such as Shakespeare, Milton, Swift, Byron, Dickens, and some others were therefore in process of translation: when the task had been completed, their original writings, with all else that survived of the literature of the past, would be destroyed. These translations were a slow and difficult business, and it was not expected that they would be finished before the first or second decade of the twenty-first century.

There were also large quantities of merely utilitarian literature— indispensable technical manuals, and the like— that had to be treated in the same way. It was chiefly in order to allow time for the preliminary work of translation that the final adoption of Newspeak had been fixed for so late a date as 2050.

"I told you." G Orwell, 1949.