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# Surveillance and Censorship as The Keys to a Successful Totalitarian Government

A government's success is intrinsically linked to its ability to control its citizens. In the case of George Orwell's dystopian novel, 1984, the central government, Ingsoc, violates freedom of speech and its civilians' privacy in order to root out dissenting ideas about leadership. Through similar practices, the Chinese government also violates its civilians' rights in order to maintain its power. These practices involve propaganda about the government, surveillance of their citizens and censorship of expression by the government. These practices are essential to the government's success and effectiveness. Through propaganda, surveillance and censorship the Chinese government and Ingsoc are able to oppress their civilians and maintain political stability and power.

Through propaganda, a government is able to control and mold its civilians into believing or doing anything they want. It is an extremely effective tool to a government because it can get their desired message or ideology across to its people through visuals and words. This is especially true when examining Ingsoc and its use of the "Two Minutes Hate" where civilians are gathered to watch a propaganda film that reminds them of the sworn enemy of the party and denounces anti-party ideals and actions. The playing of this film to the people is used to reinforce and direct the fear and hate of the people to a distinguishable face that represents revolutionary ideas. Orwell writes, "The self-satisfied sheep-like face on the screen, and the terrifying power of the Eurasian army behind it, were too much to be borne: besides, the sight or even the thought of Goldstein produced fear and anger automatically" (Orwell 17). This fear and hate that the citizens are conditioned to have toward Goldstein, the main enemy of the party, helps Ingsoc in multiple ways. It gives its citizens a visual enemy to unify against through their shared hate and fear. This also fills the people with patriotic love for their government that they believe is protecting them from the threat of Goldstein. This shared love for the government and fear of the enemy ensures that the masses of people will not revolt or become unhappy with the party, giving it stability and power. This way of condemning the enemy to gain the support of its people is similar to communist China's propaganda. Communist China produced many posters condemning the "Gang of Four" which was a group of four communist leaders in China which were labeled as enemies for having counter revolutionary ideas. The leader of communist China, Mao Zedong, issued a cultural revolution in 1966 which called for the purging of capitalist ideas and "bourgeois thinking" establishing communist ideas as law. During this cultural revolution anything or anyone displaying anti-communist ideas were destroyed. The "Gang of Four" were labeled as fostering these anti-revolutionary ideas against Mao and were condemned on posters. One poster depicting workers and soldiers holding up their arms triumphantly with the caption, "Angrily condemn the crime of the 'Gang of Four' anti-Party clique's plot to usurp Party power!". This message is used to reaffirm the people in the party's goal of condemning the actions of the enemy. This allows the party to maintain its power and install its values into its people. Through this propaganda utilized by Ingsoc and communist China they are effectively able to maintain power and support of their citizens.

Surveillance is another extremely effective way that Ingsoc and China maintain control over its people. In the novel, 1984, everyone's home is equipped with a "telescreen" which can be used by the Party to listen in on the people in the house. The telescreen also can not be turned

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off, only dimmed so that everything can be seen and heard at all times. This constant monitoring is done by the "Thought Police" which enforced the party's ability to control its citizens and their actions inside their homes. Orwell writes, "You had to live—did live, from habit that became instinct—in the assumption that every sound you made was overheard..." (Orwell 5). Due to Ingsoc being able to monitor its citizens through their telescreens allows Ingsoc to have an even tighter grip on what is being said and done even in people's houses. Giving them no possible opportunity to do something that is against the party's values. The ability to monitor its citizens' private lives gives Ingsoc almost complete power and stability over its citizens. Similarly, China has started using an advanced form of surveillance to track its citizens. China's surveillance combines phone information and facial recognition technology to identify someone and access all their personal information. The New York Times writes, "Once combined and fully operational, the tools can help police grab the identities of people as they walk down the street..." (Mozur). This type of tracking and monitoring allows police to watch everything that is going on and identify anyone. This allows for no privacy at any time to its citizens personal information and business and increases China's power over its people.

Censorship is the third way that Ingsoc and China are able to control their people and maintain their political control. Censorship of freedom of speech allows governments to silence discussion of ideas that go against or criticize the party's agenda or ideals. Ingsoc censors its public with the Thought Police which capture people who have committed thought crimes against the Party. If someone commits a thought crime against the Party the Thought Police will come arrest them in the night and they will disappear without a trace as if they never existed. Orwell writes, "Your name was removed from the registers, every record of everything you had ever done was wiped out, your one-time existence was denied and then forgotten..." (Orwell 24). With this threat of being kidnapped as well as being erased from every record and memory looming over people's heads like a cloud, nobody is likely to speak out against the Party. This is an extreme form of censorship which proved to be effective in instilling fear in its people. Allowing Ingsoc to maintain complete power over its citizens every action, even their thoughts. In a similar but not so extreme vein, China censors what its populous can view and discuss on the internet. China has some of the harshest and most extreme internet restrictions around the globe. The Chinese government is known to monitor the cell phone calls and other internet conversations of its citizens looking out for anything that might be critical of their leadership. If they see something they perceive as a threat they will shut down that person's internet access and if they find it necessary, will arrest and imprison the person. Leigh Hartman, a writer for ShareAmerica, writes, "The Chinese government censors the internet to block dissent and to maintain its control over its population" (Hartman). Controlling and censoring what Chinese citizens are allowed to talk about and view over the internet is essential to the government's continued power because of how fast and effectively information can spread on the internet. Through heavy censorship the Chinese government is able to maintain its control over controversial ideas of its people.

In conclusion, in order for a government to be stable and effective, it must have control of its citizens. Through propaganda, surveillance and censorship Ingsoc and the Chinese government share similarities in the way they maintain control over their citizens and their personal lives. By scrutinizing and monitoring what their people are able to discuss, view and express, Ingsoc and the Chinese government are able to maintain their power and influence even in their citizen's private lives. Without using these tools of controlling the public, neither governments would be able to maintain stability and power.