

BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU!!

So, Bristolians such as myself have to prepare ourselves for the inevitable name change of the iconic Colston Hall in 2020. If we lose this venue's name, then I would claim that other politically inconvenient descriptions of buildings/streets will quickly follow suit. This represents the worst excesses of public censorship, which are likely to be re-enacted by the thought police (Bristol City Council) a la George Orwell's totalitarian novel 1984.

This would no doubt include gender neutralisation of which the term 'dinner ladies' is perhaps a prime example, for they have now become known as: 'school meals supervisory assistants'. Moreover, manholes have become utility/maintenance holes!

The word man in manholes has led me to reflect that after many years in the fire brigade as a 'fireman' I had metaphorically been neutered into that of a 'firefighter'. This linguistic juggling seems totally unnecessary for what possible gender confusion there could be between: 'fireman/firewoman'?

My fireman's service was acknowledged with the award of the Fire Brigade Long Service and Good Conduct medal around the edge of which is inscribed: 'Fireman Roger L Smith'. Perhaps in the same way the Colston Hall is to be renamed I should return my medal to the fire authority for updating by its current censors! They could then return it with the offending 'Fireman' ground off to be replaced with a politically correct definition of 'Firefighter'.

The renaming of the Colston Hall, and my own example of being an outdated 'fireman' are surely all too reminiscent of 1984 'Big Brother's language of 'Newspeak,' which would finally be adopted according to the last words in his novel as late as 2050. Well it seems that Bristol is some 31 years early; just how long before the name of Bristol itself is erased, and replaced by the zealots of the human resources department?

R L Smith.
Retired FIREMAN!