



CCTV CAMERAS

According to the latest studies, Britain has a staggering 4.2million CCTV cameras - one for every 14 people in the country - and 20 per cent of cameras globally. It has been calculated that each person is caught on camera an average of 300 times daily.

Use of spy cameras in modern-day Britain is now a chilling mirror image of Orwell's fictional world, created in the post-war Forties in a fourth-floor flat overlooking Canonbury Square in Islington, North London.

On the wall outside his former residence - flat number 27B - where Orwell lived until his death in 1950, an historical plaque commemorates the anti-authoritarian author. And within 200 yards of the flat, there are 32 CCTV cameras, scanning every move.

Orwell's view of the tree-filled gardens outside the flat is under 24-hour surveillance from two cameras perched on traffic lights.

The flat's rear windows are constantly viewed from two more security cameras outside a conference centre in Canonbury Place.

In a lane, just off the square, close to Orwell's favourite pub, the Compton Arms, a camera at the rear of a car dealership records every person entering or leaving the pub.

Within a 200-yard radius of the flat, there are another 28 CCTV cameras, together with hundreds of private, remote-controlled security cameras used to scrutinise visitors to homes, shops and offices. The message is reminiscent of a 1949 poster to mark the launch of Orwell's 1984: 'Big Brother is Watching You'.

(Source : The Evening Standard – March 2007)