



ADVANCED GCE
CRITICAL THINKING
Unit 4: Critical Reasoning

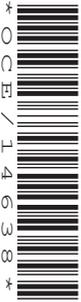
F504/RB

RESOURCE BOOKLET

To be opened on the day of the examination

Wednesday 3 February 2010
Morning

Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes



INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

- Read and use Documents 1 and 2 to answer the questions.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

- This document consists of 4 pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

Background Information

Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA)

This became law in 2000. It set up regulations which apply to the way the police and security services are allowed to investigate and observe private individuals. In 2003 the Home Secretary extended the Act so that it also regulates the way local authorities use surveillance. Although no new powers were created in 2000 or 2003, there is some concern that local authorities are using existing powers more as a result of the Act.

Document 1

I'm a journalist under cover with some spies, about to plant a bug. To be more precise, I am in a stylish, modern flat in a riverside block in Newcastle, with a man called Ed and a man called Ian, and a young couple who live in the flat and have barely slept in six months. 1

The target lives in a neighbouring flat. He has a stereo in his living room and a stereo in his bedroom. He goes clubbing twice a week, and usually brings the club home. Every time Manchester United play, he has a party. "I think he's also got a new drum kit," adds the husband, helplessly. He has never spoken to this neighbour. He was going to once. Another neighbour got there first. It sounded as though there was going to be a fight. 2

Depending on who you ask, Ed Foster and Ian Cross are "snoopers" (most newspapers), "Town Hall Stasi*" (one newspaper) and "eroding our fundamental freedoms" (Shadow Home Secretary). These are the people whom the *Daily Mail* and *The Daily Telegraph* insist are hell-bent on misusing "anti-terrorist legislation" and turning Britain into a bleak copy of Cold War East Germany. 3

Ask Newcastle City Council, however, and it will tell you that Ed Foster (clean-cut, bespectacled) and Ian Cross (greyer, looks like a former policeman and is one) are council employees in the environment section. Its team plants around 60 of these "bugs" each year, in response to about 8,000 complaints about noise. 4

Under RIPA, as people keep telling me, surveillance has to be "proportionate". It's a very vague term. Dog poo and neighbour noise sound like trivial matters only when it's not your sleep that is being interrupted or your front garden that is squidgy and brown. You may find all this surveillance rather chilling, in a country such as ours. Me, I just think of that weary couple, not wanting any more trouble, just wanting some sleep. And, you know, I don't think this surveillance is such a big deal. 5

Adapted from: <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/crime/article5200949.ece>

* former Communist East German secret police

Document 2

A man goes out to buy some beer. As he leaves the off-licence, a man lurking in a nearby doorway takes a sneaky photograph of him. In the early morning two days later, the police call at his house and charge him with buying alcohol for under-18s. He is told that over the past two weeks he has received twelve letters from local beer and wine suppliers, visited six alcohol-related websites and been seen in conversation with three 17-year-olds later arrested for drunkenness. Are we talking about East Berlin in 1952? No, it could be London, Liverpool or Nottingham in 2008. The Stasi, Communist East Germany's secret police, was disbanded 19 years ago; but its mindset, powers to intimidate and methods live on in 21st-century Britain.

1

Thousands of council workers across Britain today routinely authorise and engage in surveillance operations that were typical of dictatorships a generation ago. Letters are intercepted, conversations overheard, meetings photographed, internet connections monitored and contacts and patterns of behaviour established. All this undercover intelligence is gathered not to prevent a bomb plot or break up terrorist cells but to ensure that applicants to a popular school live in the catchment area, to stop dogs fouling the pavement or to catch fly-tippers. With barely a whimper of protest, Britons are being herded into the kind of supervised society, with camera surveillance, snooping and controls, once seen as typical of dictatorship.

2

It seemed sensible when RIPA was passed to give some powers of investigation to relevant local officials. Fly-tipping, selling counterfeit goods and letting dogs foul pavements infuriate voters, who frequently urge their councils to crack down on such abuses. But governments should beware of such knee-jerk responses. Allowing councils to give themselves permission to carry out surveillance sets us on a dangerous path. This is how freedom is eroded. Dictatorships are upheld not by daily terror but by giving petty, unchallenged powers to minor officials. And such powers are being used more and more. In 2007 there were 12,494 applications for directed surveillance, almost double the number for 2006.

3

Already, Britain has more surveillance cameras than any other Western democracy. With shop 'loyalty' cards, data banks, phone and internet records and official surveys, our lives are recorded hour by hour. Most people accept this as the price of consumer convenience or social harmony. And most councils do their best to ensure that abuses of power are prevented by strict guidelines or staff training. But the trend is alarming. When RIPA was passed, MPs assumed they were helping to catch terrorists and hardened criminals. They did not think the powers were to be used to snoop on dog-walkers. We must not, like the Stasi, assume a right to pry into others' lives.

4

Adapted from: Leading article in The Times Saturday May 31 2008

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