"Controller! What an unexpected pleasure! Boys, what are you thinking of? This is the Controller; this is his Fordship, Mustapha Mond." His fordship Mustapha Mond! The eyes of the saluting students almost popped out of their heads. Mustapha Mond! The Resident Controller for Western Europe! One of the Ten World Controllers. One of the Ten … and he sat down on the bench with the D.H.C., he was going to stay, to stay, yes, and actually talk to them … straight from the horse's mouth. Straight from the mouth of Ford himself.

Two shrimp-brown children emerged from a neighbouring shrubbery, stared at them for a moment with large, astonished eyes, then returned to their amusements among the leaves.

"You all remember," said the Controller, in his strong deep voice, "you all remember, I suppose, that beautiful and inspired saying of Our Ford's: History is bunk. History," he repeated slowly, "is bunk."

He waved his hand; and it was as though, with an invisible feather wisk, he had brushed away a little dust, and the dust was Harappa, was Ur of the Chaldees; some spider-webs, and they were Thebes and Babylon and Cnossos and Mycenae. Whisk. Whisk–and where was Odysseus, where was Job, where were Jupiter and Gotama and Jesus? Whisk–and those specks of antique dirt called Athens and Rome, Jerusalem and the Middle Kingdom–all were gone. Whisk–the place where Italy had been was empty. Whisk, the cathedrals; whisk, whisk, King Lear and the Thoughts of Pascal. Whisk, Passion; whisk, Requiem; whisk, Symphony; whisk …

"That's why you're taught no history," the Controller was saying. "But now the time has come …"

The D.H.C. looked at him nervously. There were those strange rumours of old forbidden books hidden in a safe in the Controller's study. Bibles, poetry–Ford knew what.

Mustapha Mond intercepted his anxious glance and the corners of his red lips twitched ironically.

"It's all right, Director," he said in a tone of faint derision, "I won't corrupt them."

The D.H.C. was overwhelmed with confusion.

Mustapha Mond leaned forward, shook a finger at them. "Just try to realize it," he said, and his voice sent a strange thrill quivering along their diaphragms. "Try to realize what it was like to have a viviparous mother."

That smutty word again. But none of them dreamed, this time, of smiling.

"Try to imagine what 'living with one's family' meant."

They tried; but obviously without the smallest success.

"And do you know what a 'home' was?"

They shook their heads.

Home, home–a few small rooms, stiflingly over-inhabited by a man, by a periodically teeming woman, by a rabble of boys and girls of all ages. No air, no space; an understerilized prison; darkness, disease, and smells.

(The Controller's evocation was so vivid that one of the boys, more sensitive than the rest, turned pale at the mere description and was on the point of being sick.)

And home was as squalid psychically as physically. Psychically, it was a rabbit hole, a midden, hot with the frictions of tightly packed life, reeking with emotion. What suffocating intimacies, what dangerous, insane, obscene relationships between the members of the family group! Maniacally, the mother brooded over her children (*her* children) … brooded over them like a cat over its kittens; but a cat that could talk, a cat that could say, "My baby, my baby," over and over again. "My baby, and oh, oh, at my breast, the little hands, the hunger, and that unspeakable agonizing pleasure! Till at last my baby sleeps, my baby sleeps with a bubble of white milk at the corner of his mouth. My little baby sleeps …"

"Yes," said Mustapha Mond, nodding his head, "you may well shudder."

Our Ford–or Our Freud, as, for some inscrutable reason, he chose to call himself whenever he spoke of psychological matters–Our Freud had been the first to reveal the appalling dangers of family life. The world was full of fathers–was therefore full of misery; full of mothers–therefore of every kind of perversion from sadism to chastity; full of brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts–full of madness and suicide.

"And yet, among the savages of Samoa, in certain islands off the coast of New Guinea …"

The tropical sunshine lay like warm honey on the naked bodies of children tumbling promiscuously among the hibiscus blossoms. Home was in any one of twenty palm-thatched houses. In the Trobriands conception was the work of ancestral ghosts; nobody had ever heard of a father.

"Extremes," said the Controller, "meet. For the good reason that they were made to meet."

Mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters. But there were also husbands, wives, lovers. There were also monogamy and romance.

"Though you probably don't know what those are," said Mustapha Mond.

They shook their heads.

Family, monogamy, romance. Everywhere exclusiveness, a narrow channelling of impulse and energy.

"But every one belongs to every one else," he concluded, citing the hypnopædic proverb.

The students nodded, emphatically agreeing with a statement which upwards of sixty-two thousand repetitions in the dark had made them accept, not merely as true, but as axiomatic, self-evident, utterly indisputable.

"Think of water under pressure in a pipe." They thought of it. "I pierce it once," said the Controller. "What a jet!"

He pierced it twenty times. There were twenty piddling little fountains.

"My baby. My baby …!"

"Mother!" The madness is infectious.

"My love, my one and only, precious, precious …"

Mother, monogamy, romance. High spurts the fountain; fierce and foamy the wild jet. The urge has but a single outlet. My love, my baby. No wonder these poor pre-moderns were mad and wicked and miserable. Their world didn't allow them to take things easily, didn't allow them to be sane, virtuous, happy. What with mothers and lovers, what with the prohibitions they were not conditioned to obey, what with the temptations and the lonely remorses, what with all the diseases and the endless isolating pain, what with the uncertainties and the poverty–they were forced to feel strongly. And feeling strongly (and strongly, what was more, in solitude, in hopelessly individual isolation), how could they be stable?

"Stability," said the Controller, "stability. No civilization without social stability. No social stability without individual stability." His voice was a trumpet. Listening they felt larger, warmer.

The machine turns, turns and must keep on turning–for ever. It is death if it stands still. A thousand millions scrabbled the crust of the earth. The wheels began to turn. In a hundred and fifty years there were two thousand millions. Stop all the wheels. In a hundred and fifty weeks there are once more only a thousand millions; a thousand thousand thousand men and women have starved to death.

Wheels must turn steadily, but cannot turn untended. There must be men to tend them, men as steady as the wheels upon their axles, sane men, obedient men, stable in contentment.

Crying: My baby, my mother, my only, only love groaning: My sin, my terrible God; screaming with pain, muttering with fever, bemoaning old age and poverty–how can they tend the wheels? And if they cannot tend the wheels … The corpses of a thousand thousand thousand men and women would be hard to bury or burn.

"Stability," insisted the Controller, "stability. The primal and the ultimate need. Stability. Hence all this."

With a wave of his hand he indicated the gardens, the huge building of the Conditioning Centre, the naked children furtive in the undergrowth or running across the lawns.

Impulse arrested spills over, and the flood is feeling, the flood is passion, the flood is even madness: it depends on the force of the current, the height and strength of the barrier. The unchecked stream flows smoothly down its appointed channels into a calm well-being. (The embryo is hungry; day in, day out, the blood-surrogate pump unceasingly turns its eight hundred revolutions a minute. The decanted infant howls; at once a nurse appears with a bottle of external secretion. Feeling lurks in that interval of time between desire and its consummation. Shorten that interval, break down all those old unnecessary barriers.

"Fortunate boys!" said the Controller. "No pains have been spared to make your lives emotionally easy–to preserve you, so far as that is possible, from having emotions at all."

"Ford's in his flivver," murmured the D.H.C. "All's well with the world."

"Consider your own lives," said Mustapha Mond. "Has any of you ever encountered an insurmountable obstacle?"

The question was answered by a negative silence.

"Has any of you been compelled to live through a long time-interval between the consciousness of a desire and its fulfillment?"

"Well," began one of the boys, and hesitated.

"Speak up," said the D.H.C. "Don't keep his Fordship waiting."

"I once had to wait nearly four weeks before a girl I wanted would let me have her."

"And you felt a strong emotion in consequence?"

"Horrible!"

"Horrible; precisely," said the Controller. "Our ancestors were so stupid and short-sighted that when the first reformers came along and offered to deliver them from those horrible emotions, they wouldn't have anything to do with them."

"Take Ectogenesis. Pfitzner and Kawaguchi had got the whole technique worked out. But would the Governments look at it? No. There was something called Christianity. Women were forced to go on being viviparous."

"Sleep teaching was actually prohibited in England. There was something called liberalism. Parliament, if you know what that was, passed a law against it. The records survive. Speeches about liberty of the subject. Liberty to be inefficient and miserable. Freedom to be a round peg in a square hole."

"Or the Caste System. Constantly proposed, constantly rejected. There was something called democracy. As though men were more than physico-chemically equal."

"The Nine Years' War began in A.F. 141."

"Phosgene, chloropicrin, ethyl iodoacetate, diphenylcyanarsine, trichlormethyl, chloroformate, dichlorethyl sulphide. Not to mention hydrocyanic acid."

"The noise of fourteen thousand aeroplanes advancing in open order. But in the Kurfurstendamm and the Eighth Arrondissement, the explosion of the anthrax bombs is hardly louder than the popping of a paper bag."

Ch3C6H2(NO2)3+Hg(CNO)2=well, what? An enormous hole in the ground, a pile of masonry, some bits of flesh and mucus, a foot, with the boot still on it, flying through the air and landing, flop, in the middle of the geraniums–the scarlet ones; such a splendid show that summer!

"The Russian technique for infecting water supplies was particularly ingenious."

"The Nine Years' War, the great Economic Collapse. There was a choice between World Control and destruction. Between stability and …"

"Liberalism, of course, was dead of anthrax, but all the same you couldn't do things by force."

"Government's an affair of sitting, not hitting. You rule with the brains and the buttocks, never with the fists. For example, there was the conscription of consumption."

"Every man, woman and child compelled to consume so much a year. In the interests of industry. The sole result …"

"Conscientious objection on an enormous scale. Anything not to consume. Back to nature."

"Back to culture. Yes, actually to culture. You can't consume much if you sit still and read books."

"Eight hundred Simple Lifers were mowed down by machine guns at Golders Green."

"Then came the famous British Museum Massacre. Two thousand culture fans gassed with dichlorethyl sulphide."

"In the end," said Mustapha Mond, "the Controllers realized that force was no good. The slower but infinitely surer methods of ectogenesis, neo-Pavlovian conditioning and hypnopædia …"

"The discoveries of Pfitzner and Kawaguchi were at last made use of. An intensive propaganda against viviparous reproduction …"

"Accompanied by a campaign against the Past; by the closing of museums, the blowing up of historical monuments (luckily most of them had already been destroyed during the Nine Years' War); by the suppression of all books published before A.F. 15O.''

"There were some things called the pyramids, for example.

"And a man called Shakespeare. You've never heard of them of course."

"Such are the advantages of a really scientific education."

"The introduction of Our Ford's first T-Model …"

"Chosen as the opening date of the new era."

"There was a thing, as I've said before, called Christianity."

"The ethics and philosophy of under-consumption …"

"So essential when there was under-production; but in an age of machines and the fixation of nitrogen–positively a crime against society."

"All crosses had their tops cut and became T's. There was also a thing called God."

"We have the World State now. And Ford's Day celebrations, and Community Sings, and Solidarity Services."

"There was a thing called Heaven; but all the same they used to drink enormous quantities of alcohol."

"There was a thing called the soul and a thing called immortality."

"But they used to take morphia and cocaine."

"Two thousand pharmacologists and bio-chemists were subsidized in A.P. 178."

"Six years later it was being produced commercially. The perfect drug."

"Euphoric, narcotic, pleasantly hallucinant."

"All the advantages of Christianity and alcohol; none of their defects."

"Take a holiday from reality whenever you like, and come back without so much as a headache or a mythology."

"Stability was practically assured."

"It only remained to conquer old age."

"Gonadal hormones, transfusion of young blood, magnesium salts …"

"All the physiological stigmata of old age have been abolished. And along with them, of course …"

"Along with them all the old man's mental peculiarities. Characters remain constant throughout a whole lifetime."

"Work, play–at sixty our powers and tastes are what they were at seventeen. Old men in the bad old days used to renounce, retire, take to religion, spend their time reading, thinking–*thinking!*"

"Now–such is progress–the old men work, the old men copulate, the old men have no time, no leisure from pleasure, not a moment to sit down and think–or if ever by some unlucky chance such a crevice of time should yawn in the solid substance of their distractions, there is always *soma*, delicious *soma*, half a gramme for a half-holiday, a gramme for a week-end, two grammes for a trip to the gorgeous East, three for a dark eternity on the moon; returning whence they find themselves on the other side of the crevice, safe on the solid ground of daily labour and distraction, scampering from feely to feely, from girl to pneumatic girl, from Electromagnetic Golf course to …"

"Go away, little girl," shouted the D.H.C. angrily. "Go away, little boy! Can't you see that his fordship's busy? Go and do your erotic play somewhere else."

"Suffer little children," said the Controller.