

# Words and Platforms

—reminders for oppressors



The essential educational task  
is to equip the oppressed with words

— the ABC, the first two Rs,  
Shakespeare and all that.

Part of the essential political task  
is to provide them with platforms,  
—a hearing in the places and spaces  
where a rule is to listen.

(Words + platforms = communicative competence).

Often you yourself should be silent,  
or at least your memoranda should be unmemorable.

But sometimes you may speak,  
you may use both words and platforms.

Choose them, choose them both with care.

**Source:** 'Memorandum for Oppressors', part of a talk at St James's Church, Piccadilly, June 1984. The full text of the memorandum can be read at <https://www.patience-and-passion.org/pdfs/Memorandum.pdf>