

# The Loyalties of E. Herbert Norman

Peyton V. Lyon

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# CRITIQUE

## The Loyalties of E. Herbert Norman

Peyton V. Lyon

A report prepared for External Affairs and International Trade Canada, March 18, 1990. The views expressed in this report are those of the author.

"I trust in an exhaustive and fairminded study..."

Ambassador E. Herbert Norman, Cairo, April 4, 1957.

ON 14 DECEMBER 1989, I signed a sixty day contract with the Department of External Affairs to review all its files on Norman, and also all those containing memoranda, dispatches and telegrams authored by him. I undertook to follow "lines of pursuit which may help clarify Norman's allegiance to Canada ... and any relationship he many have had with the Soviet Union." The report, "suitable for public release," was "ideally to be highly unequivocal in putting to rest once and for all allegations about Norman." Apart from that, I was given no indication of External's preferred outcome, if any. My conclusion would be "guilty," "not guilty" or "not proven," depending on the evidence.

Access to the relevant External files was total and straightforward, and I'm confident that I have seen everything in them that is at all likely to bear on my assignment. Access to the RCMP files (now with the Canadian Security Intelligence Service [CSIS]) proved complicated but was eventually authorized. A short parliamentary discussion between members of Parliament David Kilgour and Patrick Boyer may have facilitated this outcome. The Department of National Defence made available interesting documents related to Norman's wartime intelligence activity. The Library of the University of British Columbia sent copies of

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68 letters from Norman's spirited and revealing correspondence with his family. I also received a copy of the FBI's Norman file. Letters that I wrote to a dozen newspapers produced five responses — only one of them critical of Norman. I also received seven phone calls from four people. I strongly doubt that my central findings could be significantly altered by additional information. Any deficiencies in the report cannot be blamed on a shortage of either cooperation or sources. (More about sources in Appendix A.)

### *Conclusions*

*My most important conclusions are both confident and unequivocal.*

1. *Was Herbert Norman a spy?* No. Not one iota of evidence suggests that he was.
2. *Was Herbert Norman a Soviet "agent of influence"?* Did he offer his own government, or any other, counsel calculated to promote actions favorable to any enemy, real or potential? Or supply misinformation that would have the same result? No. There is not the slightest evidence that he was an "agent of influence" and much to the contrary. After forty years of investigation, there is no smoking gun.
3. *Was Norman a Marxist, a Communist, and a Soviet sympathiser?* Yes. Openly and enthusiastically while a student at Cambridge, 1933-35; less openly but perhaps more dogmatically while in Toronto 1936-37, and Harvard 1936-38. His emancipation from communism was gradual and cannot be pinpointed. After joining the public service in 1939, he cut his Party associates but kept up several friendships among Marxists that he had formed during the 1930s.
4. *Was Norman a member of the Communist Party in Canada, Britain or the United States?* No. He was certainly a fellow traveller, but he was never formally admitted and given a card. His known services to the Party were trivial.
5. *Did Norman lie about his Communist past?* No and yes. It was not a lie to have denied being a Member of the Party. He understated, however, the degree of his commitment and also his knowledge of the views and activities of his left-wing friends. His failure to tell the whole truth damaged his minister's credibility and contributed to his own demise.
6. *Why did Norman commit suicide?* Probably for the reason he himself offered. Although fatigue was a factor, he would not have taken his life had he not had cause to dread a repetition of the ordeal of 1950-52 that had been created by the McCarthyite investigation conducted by the US Senate Internal Security Subcommittee (SISS). He did not appear to fear serious new revelations. He knew, however, that the subcommittee was determined to "get" Lester Pearson as well as himself, and that its tactics were ruthless.
7. *Was there a coverup?* Yes, but only in the obvious sense that all governments treat security cases as strictly confidential, and for understandable reasons. Sources, both domestic and foreign, must be protected; much of the security material on file is gossip, and even after forty years there are innocent individuals who could be hurt. In the Norman case, Pearson gave out more information than is conventional, and both he and Norman suffered because of it. Both External and CSIS have in fact released the large bulk of their

Norman files under Canada's Access to Information legislation; the deleted material, all of which I have seen, does not alter the picture. There was certainly no coverup of evidence indicating that Norman was a Communist spy or an agent of influence. The files I have reviewed contained no evidence to support such an allegation.

Herbert Norman was loyal to the people of Japan, the land of his childhood. He was loyal to humanity, and to the pursuit of historical truth. He was loyal to himself; he never denounced the idealistic youth who misguidedly saw in Communism and the Soviet Union the only hope for civilised man. He was above all, loyal to his friends and to his country.

These conclusions must be elaborated but first I shall sketch very briefly Norman's remarkable career. For a full biography I recommend the sympathetic treatment by an American historian, Professor Roger Bowen, *Innocence is not Enough*. Much shorter, but also excellent, is the chapter by Charles Taylor in his *Six Canadian Journeys*. Still shorter is the fine article by Sydney Katz in *Maclean's*, 28 September 1957. The case for the prosecution is found in *No Sense of Evil*, by James Barros, an American who has taught Political Science at the University of Toronto since 1969.

#### EGERTON HERBERT NORMAN

HERBERT NORMAN was born on 1 September 1909, of Canadian parents in Karuizawa, Japan. His father (Daniel 1864-1941) and brother (Howard 1905-88) were both Methodist (later United Church) missionaries, and his sister Grace (1903-89) married a United Church minister, Rev. R.C. Wright. Norman was taught at home by his Mother (Katherine Heal 1870-1952) until his eighth year, and then at the Canadian Academy in Kobe, Japan, apart from 1923-24 in Toronto and his final year (1928-29) at Albert College, Belleville, Ontario. His formal education was interrupted by two years (1926-28) in two sanatoria in Japan and Alberta.

Norman, following his parents, brother and sister, studied at Victoria College, Toronto (1929-33). His field was classics, and he won a scholarship to study medieval history at Trinity College, Cambridge (1933-35). During these two years he became active in left wing politics and obtained high second-class honours.

On return to Canada, he married Irene Clark of Hamilton and taught classics at Upper Canada College (1935-36). He won a Rockefeller Foundation Award to study Japanese and Chinese at Harvard (1936-38) and Columbia (1938-39). His doctoral dissertation was defended in May 1940 and published under the auspices of the Institute of Pacific Relations as *The Emergence of Modern Japan*; this book won quick and enduring recognition as a landmark in Japanese historiography.

Late in 1939, Norman joined External Affairs as a language officer and was posted to Tokyo early in 1940. He was interned after Pearl Harbour (October 1941) but was able to return to Ottawa by mid-1942 where he headed a unit set up to interpret decoded Japanese intelligence.

From September 1945 to January 1946, he served in Tokyo as a senior intelligence officer on the staff of General Douglas MacArthur who praised him highly and remained remarkably accessible to him in subsequent years. From March to July 1946, Norman was surrogate in Washington for Lester Pearson on the Far Eastern Commission.

Norman headed the Canadian Liaison Mission in Tokyo from August 1946 to October 1950 when he was recalled to Ottawa to answer questions about alleged Communist associations. He was fully cleared, and then appointed Head of the American and Far Eastern Division (end of 1950-mid 1951). Also in 1951, he served briefly as Acting Permanent Representative to the United Nations and, with Pearson, took part in the San Francisco Conference on the Japanese Peace Treaty. He was Head of the Information Division from July 1951 until May 1953 when he was appointed High Commissioner to New Zealand. In August 1956, just before the Suez Crisis, he took up his last post, Ambassador to Egypt and Lebanon. He committed suicide on 4 April 1957.

Throughout his diplomatic career, Norman continued his research and writing. His four books and a substantial number of articles and papers established him as one of the two leading Japanologists in the West, and they remain highly regarded in Japan itself. Three collections of his works have been published; the latest, in four handsome volumes in Japanese, in 1988.

### *Discussion*

1. *Was Norman a spy?* did he pass secret information to a real or potential enemy? From 1950 until his death in 1957, Norman's past and current behavior was subjected to close scrutiny by three governments, Canadian, American and British; this scrutiny increased after his suicide as politicians, journalists and scholars got into the act, and was intensified in 1968-9. In these forty years, not one instance of illicit passage of information has been established, or even seriously suggested. Espionage is not easy to prove or disprove totally, but considering the number of defections and exposures in recent years, with no revelations of spying by Norman, his innocence on this charge must be accepted. Even Norman's most dedicated prosecutor, Professor James Barros, concedes the point, and it has been confirmed by the most thorough and sophisticated means available to the government and its close allies.
2. *Was Norman an "Agent of Influence"?* Obligated to accept that there is no evidence whatever that Norman was a spy, the literary spy-catchers now focus on the allegation that he was an "agent of influence" or "an agent of disinformation," or both. It appears that this charge is even tougher than espionage to test. Confronted with an External Affairs study showing that Norman's reporting from Cairo has been "outstanding," and revealed no trace of Communist bias, Barros accused the authors of naiveté. "No agent of influence," he contended, "would be foolish enough to reveal anything in a telegram or dispatch" (185). He did not explain how Norman might have conveyed his treacherous advice from Cairo and Ottawa.

The researcher's problem is compounded when seeking to uncover an "agent of disinformation." Barros explains that "the information imparted can be false, partly false, or completely true." What does that exclude? Moreover, Barros, with rare generosity, notes that "...even honest civil servants often interpret the same facts in different ways and offer divergent advice..." (144). My primary commitment — to read the External files and pass judgment on Norman's loyalty — did indeed seem daunting! Even facts, it appears, can be evidence of treasonous "misinformation."

Fortunately, in several other situations Barros recommended a simpler approach. One of these arises out of the necessity that he perceives to test Pearson's loyalty during his entire period as a Minister and Prime Minister (201). The Barros approved method is to "juxtapose" a person's advice or actions against "Russian objectives." (186)

Up to a point, this is the approach I adopted as I waded through the "Norman" content of a multitude of External files. I also looked for evidence that Norman, in his reporting and recommendations, might have strayed from the well established consensus within the Canadian policy community about our interests and approach in the Far East, the Middle East and New Zealand. I also checked my memory against those of most of the officers who had worked with Norman in his three posts, or in External's Far Eastern Division. This procedure may not satisfy anyone who thinks that Canadian policy is made by an "Old Boys Club" or dominated by "pinks," as does Dr. Alex Kindy M.P., (Debates, 4.11.86; 19.12.96), or that Lester Pearson might have been "Moscow's ultimate mole" (Barros 201). Nor will it necessarily help if I explain that my knowledge of the broad lines of Canadian foreign policy comes from six years as a neophyte foreign service officer in Bonn and Ottawa (1953-9), and as a teacher and researcher of that policy in the years since. I never met Norman, and saw very little of Pearson until he came to Carleton as a teacher in his last two years. Until I accepted this assignment, I had read none of the books by or about Herbert Norman. My knowledge of espionage came almost exclusively from *Le Carré*.

Norman's reporting was distinguished chiefly by its excellence, and its obvious anchorage in an extraordinary knowledge of history, European and Canadian as well as Asian. His style was lucid, his judgment balanced. His policy recommendations were infrequent and always well within the mainstream of informed Canadian opinion. Not a line, nor a single comment from his co-workers, awakens doubt about his orthodoxy or loyalty. Similar conclusions were reached by both the External and RCMP officials who after his suicide independently studied his reports from Cairo. Those who had been most closely associated with Norman were the most astonished to learn that he had been an active communist in his student days, and even more surprised to hear that anyone could question his loyalty as a public servant.

Norman's right to be regarded as one of the world's two leading Japanologists was evident in his detailed treatment of Japanese parties, politicians, industrialists

and military leaders. External circulated a number of his despatches to other Commonwealth governments; this was done with pride to reciprocate in part for the copious volume of British reporting still flowing into Ottawa. One report that attracted exceptionally favorable comment dealt with a processional train trip by the Emperor and his arrogant, still powerful entourage. Barros displayed little knowledge of Commonwealth diplomacy when he deduced that one of Norman's despatches had been sent to London because Ottawa had doubts about his competence! (148-9)

Norman wholeheartedly supported the democratisation measures introduced by the military occupation of Japan under US General Douglas MacArthur. The men responsible for Japan's aggressions had to be prosecuted as war criminals, he believed, or at least purged from public life. His rank while on MacArthur's staff was only the equivalent of Major, but his unique knowledge of Japanese politics gave his voice exceptional weight, and also aroused deep suspicions among right-wing officers who saw in Japan's most conservative elements the only sure barrier to Soviet influence. One American writing on the Tokyo war crimes trials described Norman as "Stalin's agent of influence" who "strode to center stage." (Brackman 147). The only evidence I saw on file of Norman's personal views on the trials, however, consisted of an uncharacteristically awkward letter to the General urging reductions in the sentences of two convicted war criminals, neither of them remotely left-wing. There could be something in the charge that he wanted to weaken the institution of the Emperor by removing the strong figures around him, and he did believe that a purely ceremonial Emperor would be less exploitable for evil purposes by a future cabinet. Like MacArthur, Norman considered the Emperor a "puppet" and not personally responsible for the war. He did not advocate his removal.

Norman favored the break up of the huge industrial complexes. He also advocated land reform to give the peasants a stake in the system, and an incentive to resist collectivisation. His suggestions for constitutional reform in 1948 consisted only of an increase in the voting weight of the lower chamber of the diet at the expense of the upper. After ensuring that the obvious evils of the old militarist Japan had been eliminated, he advocated leaving the maximum leeway to the Japanese to develop democratic institutions in their own way, and to have the right to learn by their own mistakes. The enormous appeal to the Japanese of Norman's writings and statements lay in good part in his focus on historical figures like Ando Shoeki, who had developed an indigenous democratic philosophy. Writing a book about Shoeki obviously gave Norman great personal satisfaction and it encouraged the Japanese to look to the best in their own traditions. He was scathing, however, in his judgment of contemporary Japanese politics — "a bleak and desolate swamp." Common to all the leaders were "chicanery, opportunism, collusion and ruthless ambition."

Barros has suggested that Norman diminished the image of General MacArthur; he did slip in a few gentle digs about the General's vanity, loquaciousness

and apparent inconsistencies, but Norman also displayed enormous respect, admiration and affection for the General. He generally agreed with his policies — until MacArthur himself retreated from them. There was no one in sight with “the right sized feet” to fill the General’s shoes, he wrote. When MacArthur used his near absolute power to forestall several large strikes, Norman reported that the aim was clearly to help the population, not the occupation, and he praised the General’s explanation as “wise and sober.”

As the Cold War intensified, and occupation policy shifted in emphasis from democratisation to converting Japan into a bastion of the “Free World,” Norman’s reports revealed regret rather than anger or opposition. He did not argue against the necessity to resist the North Korean invasion of the South, and he showed understanding for such measures of the closing down of the Communist press and the purge of the Party leadership even though the net, he thought, had been cast too wide. Early on Norman and the General had agreed that the Japanese Communists were not taking orders from the Soviet Union, and might well become in time socialist and democratic. Even before the Korean War, however, Norman had reported that the Communists were losing support because of their “toadying to Moscow.” Of the Chinese Communists, Norman wrote that they “show signs of an almost Pharisaical pride in the purity of their Marxist theory. This tends to make them rigid.”

Norman’s enthusiasm for General MacArthur was fully reciprocated. “Our most valuable man” is the way the General once described Norman, and he volunteered to write Prime Minister King to request an extension of Norman’s Tokyo posting. Brigadier General E.R. Thorpe, MacArthur’s G2 and Chief of Counter-Intelligence, did write King in 1946 to say that “Norman has won the respect and admiration of all ... It will be difficult, indeed, to fill the vacancy left by his departure.” Thorpe spoke of Norman’s “profound knowledge” of Japan “and brilliant intellectual attainments.” Many in the occupation command had read Norman’s book, some several times over. His influence was certainly significant, with a strong emphasis on democratic reform and people-oriented policies; he rarely discussed economic issues, and did not advocate socialist policies such as public ownership or planning. His bias, if any, was liberal. While it is true that Norman had aroused the suspicion of General Charles Willoughby, MacArthur’s other G2, Barros’ statement that he was dismissed in January, 1946 is nonsense. In fact, he was needed in Washington as Pearson’s surrogate on the Far Eastern Commission.

Willoughby, who mistrusted all the younger, liberal officers on the occupation staff, was himself controversial. Born “Adolf Weidenbach,” and raised in Germany until eighteen, Willoughby had become a staunch admirer of Generalissimo Franco, whose picture adorned his office wall, and he retired to Spain. He leaked highly inaccurate, confidential information to the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee that was pursuing Norman. Part of this related to Norman’s role in the release of sixteen political prisoners, including two Communists who had been incarcerated



for 18 and 19 years. In a letter to his family, Norman described the moment as "the most exciting of my life." He was subsequently able to demonstrate that he and his American colleague, John Emmerson, had been acting strictly on orders, but the witch hunters in Tokyo and Washington were never persuaded.

Canada had contributed no manpower to the conquest of Japan, or its occupation, and its diplomacy was focused on Europe. It had relatively little interest, and less leverage, in shaping occupation policy for Japan. It was understandable, therefore, that much of Norman's reporting consisted simply of accounts of conversations with influential persons, notably the Supreme Commander. The situation changed with the invasion of South Korea during Norman's last year in Japan. He was authorized almost at once to place two destroyers under the newly appointed United Nations Commander, General MacArthur, and his External colleagues in New York became very active in shaping UN policy for Korea. Norman established a good rapport with the representative of the UN Secretary-General in the Far East, and also with the commander of the British forces. His telegrams about the fighting tended to be gloomy, and he regretted the fact that war talk now dominated diplomatic discourse in Tokyo; many he reported, seemed to expect World War III at any moment, and no one was interested in long term planning for peace. There was no hint of anything less than full commitment to the UN's collective security action in Korea, but he became sharply critical of MacArthur's decision to cross the 38th parallel and approach the Yalu River border with China. So too did most other Canadians.

From the moment of his recall in October 1950, Norman became a marked and haunted man. Although fully cleared, and even given "SA" clearance by the RCMP, a status beyond "Top Secret," Norman presented External's top management with a delicate problem. While satisfied about his loyalty, they recognized that the Americans, and possibly the British, would continue to be suspicious. Lacking allied confidence, and consequently access to certain classified material, his utility was limited. Several authors, including Professors Barros and Jack Granatstein, (64) have expressed surprise that Norman was quickly entrusted with the "critical and sensitive" headship of the American and Far Eastern Division, and Barros sees more than coincidence in the fact that his opposite number in London was Donald Maclean, soon to be fleeing to his spiritual home in the Soviet Union. They should not have worried. A memo to file from Evan Gill, External's head of personnel, recorded a scolding for indolence administered to Norman who, it had been observed, was absent from his desk by five o'clock every day! Norman's plausible defence was that all the important matters, like defence and trade, went to the functional divisions, leaving him a light basket. Care had been taken, as it happens, to ensure that some matters normally assigned to the US Division were channelled elsewhere, while Norman was given extra research to fill his time. Gill had been clearly unaware of the real "Norman" problem, and was perhaps the only person who ever accused him of not pulling his weight; Norman read, absorbed and wrote

at such speed that he often made chores seem easy. Two of his closest working associates have described him as a "genius."

Once, when working in 1943 as head of the Japanese section of External's "Examination Unit," he had been ticked off by T.A. Stone for doing too much. He had submitted an unrequested study about the situation in Germany; Norman explained in a pained defence that he possessed an "insatiable curiosity," and also that he had found in his scholarship that it was often illuminating to compare seemingly different situations. Indeed, this comparative dimension added greatly to the cogency of his books and articles, and to their appeal to the Japanese who many tended to regard as utterly unique.

Contrary to the repeated claims by Barros, (125) Norman's career was in clear decline as he moved from American and Far Eastern Division to Information Division to the High Commissioner post in New Zealand. Only with Cairo in 1956 did it resume an upward course. New Zealand (1954-56) presented little challenge, but Norman was so trusted that it might have been a golden opportunity to practice as an "agent of influence." The little Dominion had rarely if ever received a diplomat as knowledgeable as Herbert Norman, and likable too. He was close to everyone who counted and even, it is said, invited to sit in on the occasional cabinet meeting. New Zealand, Norman reported, was shifting away from mother Britain and becoming a close ally of the United States; it is not clear if he welcomed this trend. His best dispatches were sociological studies of Pacific islands other than New Zealand. Barros, Chapman Pincher, William Stevenson, and Peter Worthington, all claim that Norman was working for the KGB while in New Zealand. It would be interesting to learn how.

The pace changed in Cairo, and conceivably the opportunity to make mischief. At least that was the alarmist view of the Senators on the Internal Security Subcommittee. With the Suez Crisis, the focus of world attention had shifted to Cairo. When the Committee learned that Norman was in that city, and that his "prison release" accomplice, John Emmerson, was in nearby Beirut — and that the two had even lunched together, "consternation broke out." Committee Counsel Robert Morris then broke the rules, and an explicit promise, by releasing the testimony, including ancient, unsupported allegations that Norman was a Communist. His probable purpose, Barros stated, without a trace of criticism, was "... to embarrass the Canadian Government into removing [Norman] from the sensitive Cairo and Beirut posts." (125) If removal was the object, how well "Judge" Morris succeeded! (See below)

The Suez crisis brought many journalists to Cairo, and Norman, as one of the three most admired and influential Ambassadors, was in demand. The other two, the Ambassadors of India and the United States, were his close friends. A British diplomat said that Norman had learned more about the Middle East in a few months than he had learned in ten years. He quickly won Nasser's confidence and relatively easy access. This proved critical as the charismatic young dictator was notoriously prickly and impulsive. It took all of Norman's tact and knowledge to persuade him

to cooperate with the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) and, in particular, to agree to a substantial Canadian contribution. Because of their British style uniforms, and even more Canada's Commonwealth connection, Nasser was full of suspicion. Overcoming these was the high point in Norman's diplomatic career, and exhausting.

Nothing in Norman's energetic diplomacy, or in his reporting, is out of line with Canada's Middle Eastern interests which were not, at that moment, very different from those of the two superpowers. Britain and France, however, in collusion with Israel, had clearly committed "aggression" against Egypt. The United States and the Soviet Union, in step with almost the entire international community, wanted the three aggressors to withdraw, and the crisis to be contained. Canada fully concurred, but at the same time was concerned to minimize the humiliation of its wayward motherlands and to ease the painful rift within the Western alliance. Having initiated the UN peace keeping operation, Canada was also eager to avoid the embarrassment of having its forces rejected as part of the UN emergency force under Canadian General E.L.M. Burns.

Norman's reports were sympathetic to Egypt's position, but less harsh in their criticism of Israel, Britain and France than, for example, those coming from Norman Robertson in London. In a letter to his family, he said he understood why "nations around Israel have good cause for worry and concern with this tough, intransigent and aggressive neighbour planted down in their midst." He was never as critical of Israel, however, in his official reporting. His basic sympathy was, as always, with the underdog, in this case Egypt with its poverty and military vulnerability. At every opportunity, he warned the Egyptians against reliance on the Soviet Union for support. Nor did he think that Nasser was disposed to move that way if only the Western powers could recognize his psychological need to be treated as a "partner" and not a client. He was weak on ideology, Norman believed; if he had a model in the Communist world, it was Tito. His position vis-à-vis the Soviet Union reminded him of Chiang Kaishek's in 1925-27.

Another historical analogy helped Norman overcome Nasser's deep suspicion of Canada's Commonwealth link with Britain; Norman explained Canada's attitude to the Chanak incident of 1922, and its role during the Washington Conference of 1921, to illustrate the early display of its effective independence. In an argument with another Egyptian leader, Norman suggested that suspicions of the Canadian troops in UNEF be met with the explanation that they were "1,200 Burns of various ranks," a reference to the justly popular General E.L.M. "Tommy" Burns.

Norman at first found Nasser in conversation to be "simple, friendly and unaffected." Later he was moved to describe his behaviour as that of a "morose and turbulent teenager," and he criticised one of his speeches as "amateurish and irresponsible." Life under Nasser's authoritarian regime was not easy, and the conduct of diplomatic relations was trying. This contributed to Norman's depression that had started even before he heard reports of the renewal of hostile interest

in him on Capitol Hill. His dispatches and telegrammes continued to be informative and balanced until just a few days before the tragedy.

He recognised that he had a challenging responsibility in helping to establish on Egyptian soil the first UN peace-keeping force. His energetic, imaginative and professional handling of this task won the admiration of all. And his reporting, judged to be "outstanding" and without discernible bias, continued up to a few days before the tragedy.

*Was Norman a Member of the Communist Party?*

A CONSERVATIVE CANADIAN who knew Norman at Cambridge, and helped him get a job in 1935, insists that he said he was a member of the Communist Party, and even employed by it. Robert Bryce, who became the top mandarin in Ottawa, reports that while in Cambridge Norman had inquired if he intended to join "the Party"; Bryce interpreted that as an invitation from a member, but concedes that that was not necessarily the case. In his memoirs, George Ignatieff (19) wrote that Norman had been "a member of some Communist cell and openly admitted as much when he joined External Affairs." (119) But who else heard him? More compelling is Norman's own statement in a 1937 letter to his brother that it was under the "tutelage" of John Cornford that "I joined the Party."

Under interrogation, however, Norman consistently denied ever being a member, and police records bear him out; they had penetrated the Party to such an extent that they are confident they know precisely who was in, and Norman wasn't — in Britain, Canada or the United States.

Why did Norman give such contradictory accounts? Cornford, his "closest friend" at Cambridge, was the charismatic leader of the student Communists. His death in battle was a shattering blow to Norman who, in his letters home, was already chastising himself for not fighting Fascism in Spain. In context, the claim to have "joined the Party" reads more like a boast than a confession.

Apart from doubts about Norman's veracity, and subsequent developments involving Pearson, the question of Party membership is trivial. If he did not become a full member, it may well have been because the Party preferred it that way. Despite all the "black magic" attached to the card, by both members and non-members, many strong supporters did not have one. In his 1952 interrogation, Norman admitted that he had been very close to the Party and would probably have joined if he had remained in Cambridge another year. He had talked like a Communist, he conceded, and could not blame anyone for taking him for one. While in Cambridge, his one Party chore had been to recruit Indian students for the Party and to coach them in the take over of an Indian student club; he is reported to have succeeded with four students. He denied agreeing to this role but is contradicted by two friends, Professors Victor Kiernan and Harry Ferns, who took it over in succeeding years. In any case, was the task really as "sinister in the extreme," as contended by Barros? (11) Because India's struggle for independence was under

way, Indian students abroad were under close observation, and club recruitment had to be discreet. This could well be the reason why Norman did not become a full "card carrying" member. Technicality or not, it enabled Norman in subsequent years both to boast about membership and to deny it, without necessarily straying from the literal truth.

*Was Norman a Marxist, and a sympathizer with the Communist Party and the Soviet Union?*

WHILE AT CAMBRIDGE obviously yes. Both Norman and Robert Bryce attended meetings of the large and lively Cambridge Socialist Society, increasingly under Communist domination. Norman also attended meetings of the Communist group in his College, at least during his first year. The two friends marched together in a celebrated demonstration against war and Fascism organized by Guy Burgess on Armistice Day, 1933. It would up at the Cenotaph in a skirmish with a counter demonstration of right-wingers led by another Canadian, George Hees, "wading and slugging," in Norman's words. (The Hon. George Hees recalls the battle with relish, but is not clear who won!)

For a youth of Norman's sensitivity and social conscience, it would have been difficult *not* to be radical in Cambridge in the mid-1930s. Social conditions were appalling, and, even more worrying to Norman, Fascism was on the rise. Hitler alarmed him much more, he said, than Stalin had ever appealed. Appeasers were in power in Britain and France, and isolationism was predominant in the United States and Canada.

Escott Reid, the radical mandarin who is now almost the last survivor of the giants responsible for foreign policy during the post 1945 "Golden Decade" in Canada's diplomacy, has written: "If I had been at Cambridge in the mid-thirties I might have joined the British Communist Party. When I think of Herbert Norman I sometimes say to myself, 'There but for the grace of God go I'." Philip Toynbee, the distinguished journalist, did join the Party while at Oxford and much later asked himself how he would have responded to an invitation to become a Soviet agent: "I see very clearly that I would undoubtedly have accepted ... with pride. Even with joy." Fortunately he was never asked. Nor, from all available evidence, was Herbert Norman.

If one were to take Barros seriously, Norman was "programmed" at Cambridge to return to Canada and become a Soviet mole in the Canadian government. (137) Back in Toronto in 1935, however, his conduct did not conform to the predicted pattern. He did not seek to create a cover as Philby, Burgess and Maclean were busy doing. While not joining the Party, he did join an obvious front, the League against War and Fascism, and he gave some speeches for it despite his strong distaste for "haranguing." Norman also attended the foundation meeting of another Communist front, The Canadian Friends of China, and was elected secretary; the foundation meeting, according to Norman, was also the last. During this year in

Toronto, he made contact with several leading Communists, such as Chi Ch'ao-ting, Philip Jaffe and Alexander MacLeod, and there are vague reports of Party meetings in his lodgings. Being newly married, taking a graduate course, and teaching classics at Upper Canada College, did not leave much time for political activity. Moreover, he had been admonished by Headmaster Terrence MacDermot to leave politics out of the classroom. His Communist sympathies, however, were obvious to anyone who cared to ask or observe.

Norman's Communist commitment did appear to fade at Harvard (1936-38) but he and Bryce took part in a Marxist study group organized by their Japanese friend, Shigeto Tsuru. (Bryce attended on condition Tsuru come to his group studying Keynes!) Norman and Bryce concurred that the participants did not have to follow the Party line, and Norman said that Tsuru had angrily denied being a Party member. Both he and Bryce may have been surprised when it was revealed in 1957 that Tsuru had intended to develop the group into a Party cell. Despite great effort and help from the RCMP, the FBI was never able to find the paper on American Imperialism that Norman was alleged to have given.

Norman's doctoral dissertation, defended in 1940, was less Marxist in structure and tone than might have been expected. Scholars are divided over whether it should be considered Marxist at all. After publication as *The Emergence of Modern Japan*, it became remarkably influential among both scholars and officials, few of them Marxist. His subsequent books and articles were clearly less Marxist than the thesis.

The appearances of 1937 were deceptive. To judge by Norman's letters to his brother Howard, Harvard may indeed have been where his commitment to Communism peaked. Three long, angry letters, written when Norman was 28, depart radically from all the other 65 letters in this lively, genial correspondence. The three letters are polemical, cliché-ridden and in almost total conformity with the Party line. Of the second Trotskyite trial, then proceeding in Moscow, Norman wrote: "... as the damning evidence poured fourth ... I had a sickening feeling ... so painful that I could hardly think of anything else." "The calm insolence with which [the accused] regarded the trust placed in them by the Soviet government was a nauseating spectacle." He rejoiced in the purge trials as an example of "Soviet justice." "Surely," he wrote Howard, with undue optimism, "the overwhelming exposure of Trotskyism ... will delight you."

Three quick letters from Howard proved him wrong! They made Norman "pretty sore," even "groggy," but did not stem the polemical flood. Even his penmanship deteriorated. The "party line," he explained, is "simply ... the necessity of the overthrow of capitalism [and] of the transitional dictatorship of the proletariat ..." "I have no sympathy with the view that opposition to this line ought to exist in the name of liberty." "The class struggle knows no parliamentary rules ..." "... the Soviet Union [is] the hope and pride of the working class." While not free of "bureaucracy," the Soviet Union "is such a magnificent achievement — the only real example of successful socialism."

Norman told his missionary brother that the church is "a waster of healthy emotions and ideals —." "... the real standard bearer for humanity for liberty and for man's rights to develop freely is communism—." He commended "... the visible withering away of the state which is going on" in the Soviet Union and the emergence of a "classless society."

The explanation for the tone of the three letters, so unlike anything else by Norman that I have read, may be that he had just learned of the death in Spain of Cornford, and also of E.C.B. Maclaurin, another close Cambridge friend. Concerning Maclaurin, he wrote his brother: "You and I are attuned so closely that you can imagine what I felt — a mixture of shame, pride and rage — shame at my own safe and easy life — pride in sharing a political cause and a love for justice and humanity in common with him and his kind, and rage at the complacency, and cunning, with which British, American and French 'democracy' regard German intervention [in Spain] as on a par with volunteers in the International Brigade ...."

Why, when and how Norman "matured" beyond these simplistic views is not fully explained in the family correspondence or in the interrogation of January 1952. "I didn't have," he said, "any sudden light on the road like St. Paul." He did come to see that tyranny within Russia was worse than before the Revolution, and not justified by the backward social conditions. He also claimed, a bit belatedly, to have found the Trotskyite trials "repugnant." I don't recall him discussing the Hitler-Stalin pact of 1939, but his wife has said that this was the decisive turning off point for them both. Norman explained how he had tried to apply Marxism "as an X-ray" in his quest for historical truth. Increasingly, however, he had found it inadequate as a philosophy of life, a guide to political action, or a clue to what makes history "tick."

That Norman had outgrown crude Marxism is further evidenced in his diplomatic reports. His judgment of men and events are far from naive even though naiveté was the only excuse the RCMP were prepared to consider for Norman's choice of left-wing friends and stubborn loyalty to them. He clearly preferred to appear naive or forgetful than to expose associates from earlier times to the embarrassment and pain that he was enduring. They were no more guilty of ignoble motives, he thought, than he himself.

Norman told Ferns that, after the banning of the Party in 1939, he had worried that he and his life long friend, Charles Holmes, might be arrested. On entering External in 1939, however, he had drastically curtailed his contacts with Communists and fellow travellers, notably Alexander MacLeod and Philip Jaffe. He formed a new close friendship with Ferns who, although not a Party member, continued to be a "Marxist historian" and sympathiser with the Party (letter). This was while Ferns was in the Prime Minister's Office, however, and the relationship was restricted by more than distance after Ferns was eased out by Norman Robertson. When, after the war, Norman called in Cambridge on Victor Kiernan, still a Party member, he asked him to be discreet about the visit especially if talking to Ferns.

Career preservation, even more than intellectual development, probably explains Norman's increasing caution in his social contacts. However, those who are tempted, like Barros, to see this as a step on the way to becoming a mole, must explain Norman's relatively carefree behaviour in the year 1935-39. He was suspect in the 1930s, it seems, for having had left-wing friends but became even more suspect for cutting them off in the 1940s! Norman might have resolved his dilemma by denouncing his past, and identifying all his early associates. This worked for many ex-Communists, but would have been inconsistent with Norman's character.

*Did Norman lie about his Communist activity?*

AS WE HAVE NOTED, Norman was evasive about his Party membership, and probably lied about his part in recruiting Indian students. He appears to have behaved in this way because, although a notably moral man, he was worried about losing a job he cherished. He may well have been mistaken. Canadian officials, and public opinion, had not entirely succumbed to the McCarthyite fever raging in the United States. A full, candid, and timely account of his earlier association might have been accepted without the loss of his position. But it is certainly easy to understand his concern.

During his interrogation, Norman repeatedly told Bryce that he would not betray his friends. Bryce, later to become Chairman of the Security Panel, says he approved of Norman's position. Fortunately the case did not arise of a friend needing protection who might be in a position to imperil national security. Moreover, Norman's deception appears to have gone further than was strictly necessary.

His first interrogation was by George Glazebrook, a respected historian serving as the Department's Security Officer, and Norman Robertson, the Under-Secretary. Asked if he had ever been a member of the Communist Party, Norman "categorically replied that he had not." He said that "in university days ... he had associated with radical undergraduate groups, some of whose members were Red." Technically true, but misleading. "His political interests and activities," he said, "had ceased with his undergraduate days, and his interests at Harvard were different." That was no less true, and even more misleading.

The question of membership was posed repeatedly in the major recorded interrogation of January 1952. This was conducted by RCMP Inspector T.M. Guernsey and George Glazebrook, with Superintendent George McClellan presiding. Again Norman denied membership in the Party, but conceded that "In my Cambridge time I came close to it and if I had stayed there another year I might have." He granted that an informed person could have concluded from his conversation that he was a Party member. He denied that he had accepted "any posts or responsibilities; the matter of recruiting Indians had been raised by Cornford, and he had enjoyed discussion of Asian affairs with the Indian students, but he had not agreed to accept any formal responsibility." Probably untrue.



Norman claimed not to know the affiliation and views of a number of his associates including Halperin, Kiernan, Tsuru and MacLeod, and he gave misleading information about some of them. A strange case concerns Maclaurin, a New Zealander who had been killed in the Spanish War and hardly needed protection. Norman wrote to a UK security official in 1943 that he "supposed" that Tsuru had contacted Maclaurin to buy books from his shop. Asked by the 1952 interrogators about Maclaurin's political views, Norman said: "I knew him but not very well. At the time, he was a member of the Conservative Club" but he may have changed later.

Compare that with a passage in a letter to his brother right after Maclaurin's death: he "was a very close associate and companion ... [we] moved leftward together at the same speed and in the same sort of hesitancy and finally reaching the same goal at the same time."

Norman refused to condemn, or even apologise for, his youthful politics. His support for the Party and the Soviet Union had stemmed from a selfless concern about poverty, Fascism and peace and he assumed his friends were similarly motivated; they did not deserve to be treated as he was being treated or worse. So he lied, not very persuasively; but as Bryce maintains, he succeeded in being loyal both to his friends and to his country.

#### *Why did Norman commit suicide?*

I AM NOT AN EXPERT on suicide and External chose not to consult one. Several writers, notably Taylor and Bowen, have advanced explanations drawing on such factors as Norman's upbringing in Japan, with its Hara Kiri tradition; his rejection of Christianity with its abhorrence of suicide; and his preference for Greek philosophy, especially Epicurus. Pearson drew attention to the extreme fatigue brought on by Norman's energetic diplomacy during the Suez Crisis, and his wife wondered about the sleeping pills administered by Dr. Doss, ones that didn't work at night but kept him exhausted by day.

Each of these factors may well explain part of the tragedy, but the central debate is between those, notably the Senate Subcommittee and Barros, who assumed that the suicide could only have been an admission of guilt; and those, including most Canadians, who believed that the cause was, just as Norman said, reluctance to face a repetition of his ordeal of 1950-52.

In calm moments, Norman conceded that the 1950-52 questioning had been civil, and the outcome fair. Inspector T.N. Guernsey, who led for the RCMP, correctly insists that "interview" would be a more accurate description than "interrogation." King Gordon and others sought to persuade Norman that the influence of the Senate subcommittee was on the wane, and that his apprehension was ill-founded. There was in fact no move whatsoever in Ottawa to recall him for further questioning, and Pearson wrote reassuringly several times. He could not be reassured, however, and in his troubled state of mind he greatly exaggerated the

ordeal which he had undergone in 1951-52. He was correctly informed that staff of the Senate subcommittee had been soliciting new evidence and reformulating old charges. William Rusher, deputy to Chief Counsel Morris, fully documented, in his book *Special Counsel*, the extent to which Norman had become a prime target, along with Pearson. In discussing the suicide Rusher wrote, "... Norman had been my enemy, and the enemy of all who love freedom." (213) He also wrote that "A blow at Norman was, willy-nilly, a blow at Pearson." (198)

Norman agreed with that statement but not because Pearson might, as suggested by Barros, be exposed as "Moscow's ultimate mole," or even "an unconscious agent." (201) Rather it was because he had induced Pearson to understate his (Norman's) Communist activity at Cambridge; the Tories under Diefenbaker, and the media, would exploit to the hilt any discrepancy between Pearson's strong defence and the emerging truth. Recalling the ugly Parliamentary mood in 1957, and the Diefenbaker-Pearson feud, Norman was probably right, although his fear that the Government might be brought down was exaggerated.

In the longest of five suicide notes, Norman wrote of his "consciousness of sin," and yet he insisted upon his "innocence on the central issue." "At a moment like this," he added, "... I would freely confess any breach of security made by me ..." He requested the forgiveness of the Department which "is too well aware of my error — but crime no — that I have not committed." This appears to be a reiteration of his claim to have kept his oath of secrecy, but to have failed to be fully candid about his Communist past, thus creating difficulty for himself, his colleagues and his Minister. A man less sensitive, and less proud, could easily have braved it out. But Norman was not an ordinary person, either in his talent or in his vulnerability.

Nothing in what Norman said, or wrote in his suicide notes, suggests that he was afraid of important new revelations. Indeed, he said he was reassured by the awful thoroughness of the 1970-72 interrogations. He was worried, however, by the way the Senate subcommittee would "obscure and twist" the evidence, and he realised that there might be testimony that he had been virtually a Communist in his Cambridge undergraduate days. And he wished now that Pearson had not been so categorical and vulnerable in defending him.

Bowen sees the suicide as, in good part, a calculated, dramatic gesture against McCarthyism, and Irene Norman hoped that it would at least help to discredit the ugly phenomenon. The Senate subcommittee was alarmed that it might! (Rusher 214) Norman's last minutes were dignified and controlled, as evidenced by his brief note begging forgiveness of the Swedish Ambassador for having used his flat "as the only clear jump where I can avoid hitting a passerby." Once having decided to end his life, he may well have chosen a public and dramatic means to maximise its impact on world opinion. On the other hand, Norman's behaviour during the preceding days had been too erratic, and his expressions of anguish and self-pity too open, to support fully the theory of a noble, Socratic sacrifice.

Professor Norman Dewitt, who taught Norman at the University of Toronto to love the philosophy of Epicurus, and knew him well, described him after the suicide as "the Hamlet type — proud, introverted, intellectual and totally honest. Such people do not develop social callousness. They do not make confidants ... In extremis the only question is 'To be or not to be'."

The motive, overwhelmingly, was to escape the prospect of seemingly endless interrogation and humiliation for himself, and embarrassment for his Minister and colleagues. Canadians were not wrong to assign the primary blame to a group of foreign politicians and officials who had demonstrated their determination to pursue him to the end. The wave of anger that swept Parliament and the nation was not just another instance of "American bashing." It was rage over a crude, cruel violation of Canada's sovereignty, and shock at the loss of one of our brightest and best.

The entrapment of Norman continued even after his death. Two alleged suicide notes, both complete fabrications, were leaked to the press in Cairo. The forger was probably the same person or persons who concocted a CIA message to Washington that did enormous damage to Norman's reputation, and appeared to justify the subcommittee's pursuit of him. The dishonest, troublemaking lines were that Norman "told the Doctor that he was afraid Prime Minister St. Laurent was not standing behind him, that he was afraid there was going to be a Royal Commission inquiry, and that if he was called he would have to implicate 60 to 70 Americans and Canadians and that he couldn't face up to it and that he was going to destroy himself." Clearly the "doctor" was the Egyptian Dr. Doss who had talked to Norman at length about his suicidal intentions, but later denied hearing or saying anything about a "Royal Commission inquiry," weak support from St. Laurent, or the implication of 60 to 70 persons. (Bowen 158-60) Nor did King Gordon, Arthur Kilgour or Irene Norman or anyone else close to Norman during those troubled days when he did talk a lot about his fears. Moreover, Norman had been told that Pearson was solidly behind him, and that there was no move in Ottawa towards an inquiry.

US Ambassador Hare was close to both Norman and Doss, and could have been the unwitting source for the part of the CIA message that was true and lent it credibility. In his own report, however, he wrote nothing remotely like the lines insinuating that Norman had cause to dread the revelations that a new inquiry would yield. Well publicised in subsequent months, the lines were taken by many as confirmation that Norman had in fact committed treason. Both Barros (206) and Rusher (225-6) suggest that President Eisenhower was one of the first recipients of the message, and it was because of it that he had issued such an insultingly bland statement that ignored Norman's death, and attributed the uproar in Canada to a "misunderstanding" between friends that he hoped would soon blow over.

Barros bridled when he read that Norman had complained that he might be the victim of a frameup. The whole idea was "preposterous." (176) He had been similarly outraged when Norman reportedly complained that an FBI agent had been

impolite in Boston in 1942. (35) The combined actions of the Senate subcommittee, and the CIA in Cairo, may not have constituted a "frameup" in a strict sense, but they came very close. Someone certainly practiced forgery in order to exploit the suicide to shift the heat away from the subcommittee by seemingly confirming the worse suspicions of the just deceased Ambassador. I can think of no nastier episode in Canada-US relations.

*Was there a coverup?*

YES, BUT NOT ENOUGH. Canada's policy, and that of other countries, is to treat individual security cases confidentially. This denies the enemy the advantage of knowing what we know, and it protects sources, domestic and foreign. Moreover, much of the material in the security files is necessarily gossip that could be hurtful to living persons. It frequently needs correction as better information turns up. If one starts to open up a file, it becomes difficult to draw and hold a satisfactory line. The media, Parliament and the public, with whetted appetite, demand more and more. Suspicion is likely to be greater than when lips were sealed, and confidence in government less. Barros cites the handling of the Munsinger and Spencer spy cases, but these hardly make the case for openness. Rather they suggest how unproductive and ugly it is to force security cases into the political arena.

The Norman case was similar. When in 1957 the Senate subcommittee made public its outrageous charges against Norman, Prime Minister Pearson, with strong support from the Opposition, delivered one of the strongest protests in the history of Canada-US relations. Both the RCMP and External urged Pearson, in accordance with traditional policy, not to reveal any specifics from Norman's file. He was provoked, however, into saying that the Government had known for a long time of Norman's left-wing associations during his student days. He did not say much, and did not wittingly lie because Norman had misled him.

But he said too much. The columnists, editorial writers and a few Parliamentarians were off in hot pursuit. Pearson then wrote long letters to the *Montreal Gazette* and the *Globe and Mail* to answer the reflections on himself. John Diefenbaker, leader of the Opposition, and Solon Low, leader of the Social Credit Party, jumped in with ammunition provided by the *Canadian Intelligence Service Digest*, a right-wing, anti-Semitic journal. The drama of the suicide was sufficient to ensure prolonged speculation, but the partial departure from the traditional policy made matters worse. No number of government denials of treason, even when issued by Conservative Governments, could calm the suspicion and clamour. Nor did it help that Norman's name turned up frequently in the booming international spy literature, such as the books of Chapman Pincher. Often these mentions have been inspired by writers in Canada, notably James Barros. (see Appendix B)

Virtually the entire Norman story, at least as far as it is known to the Government, has been open to scholars since the passage of Access to Information legislation in 1983. With the deletion of a few pages and names to protect sources

and living persons, the External package, and another of RCMP documents, have been issued to the media, several scholars and Mrs. Herbert Norman. I have seen both full and sanitized versions and can attest that nothing has been deleted that contradicts the Government's assurances, or the serious accounts by Bowen and Taylor. Barros has also had access but, having started with a strong conviction of Norman's guilt, and also of bureaucratic duplicity, no number of new facts is likely to alter his position.

How can I be confident that I was shown all the files, with no deletions, as directed by the two ministers most concerned? I saw the eight volumes of External's Norman file, and about sixty files containing his reporting from abroad—all that I requested. The Canadian Security Intelligence Service made available all its relevant files and National Defence let me see the papers covering Norman's wartime work. I can't guarantee that I saw every relevant sheet, but I think I did. I am certain that there was no significant gap, and no blockbuster lurking in a hidden file. There is simply too much continuity, overlapping and cross-referencing in what I saw. Even more reassuring are the frequent reviews of the key documents, and in-house discussion of the significance of the evidence. Too many officials were and are involved to permit the possibility of an elaborate, decades long conspiracy to hide crucial evidence, and to what purpose? Successive governments of both parties have made statements that are limited but, post-Pearson, they have been consistent and true. One of Diefenbaker's early acts was to call for the complete Norman file. Obviously he found nothing in them that could further damage Norman or Pearson.

Norman had entered External in 1939 without a security check. Had he received one, he might well not have been accepted. Serious clearances were introduced in 1946, but Norman was abroad and had still not been cleared when disturbing information about him came to light in 1950. External rushed him home and, with the collaboration of the RCMP, subjected him to a six-week examination. Skepticism, especially in the RCMP, remained about his past associations, and seemingly poor memory, but no evidence was ever found of his being a spy, or an agent of influence. That indeed has been, to this day, the clear conclusion of every weighing of the Norman evidence within External, the RCMP and now CSIS. The most intensive study, one which took place eleven years after the suicide, produced the most impressive affirmation that there is simply no proof of treason.

There are reports of friction between the police and External, and some are probably true. Barros seems convinced that External was able to bully or hoodwink the RCMP into writing a letter to the FBI in November 1950 that seriously misrepresented its own position. (see Appendix B 11) John Sawatsky, in a good account of RCMP-External relations, reports that there were cheers in RCMP headquarters when the news came in of Norman's suicide. (145)

The Norman files, however, and consultation about the case with several senior officials, both retired and serving, present a reassuring picture. Of course External hoped to retain one of its most talented officers, one whose conduct had been

impeccable for over a decade. Of course they knew that morale in the Department would suffer if Norman were dismissed, especially if it seemed to be under American pressure. But it is also clear that Norman would have been dismissed had there been anything but "guilt by earlier association" evidence. It was External's right and duty to make the decision, and both it and the RCMP had reservations about Norman's friends and judgment. But the RCMP did nothing to resist External's decision, and the files suggest a high degree of mutual respect, at least at that time and at the top level. Inspector Guernsey, who led the 1950-52 interrogations, has confirmed this in a telephone interview. Had the RCMP felt coerced or cheated, they could have turned to their own Minister, Hon. Stuart Garson, for support. Instead they expressed their satisfaction to External in writing and then cooperated in the restoration of Norman's Top Secret clearance; two weeks later, the Commissioner wrote External "Kindly regard this correspondence an SA clearance for E.H. Norman." SA is a higher level of clearance.

Guernsey showed that an interrogation can be intelligent and thorough without being threatening. The RCMP held nothing back from External, even though External did not always reciprocate. The Police were prepared to report that earlier evidence had been inaccurate. I did not like everything I saw on the RCMP files; a few leads called forth a ridiculous expenditure of effort. But, on the basis of the Norman files, I doubt if any country is served by a security service that is more fair and more conscientious.

The Solicitor-General and External now speak as one, in public and in the files, about Herbert Norman. Differences in nuances remain, ones arising out of differences in role. Neither, however, has found anything to prove Norman was ever disloyal, and they both deny that he was ever a member of the Communist Party.

### *Special (?) Relationships*

MY CONTRACT required me to look into Norman's relations with three famous Soviet agents, Bentley, Sorge and Philby, and others like them.

The easiest to deal with is *Elizabeth Bentley*, the American courier for the KGB who, after defecting in 1950, exposed over 100 Americans who allegedly had been working for the Soviet Union. When asked if she knew Herbert Norman, she replied simply and directly: "No." And that is almost certainly the whole truth.

Why then did so many "experts" spot a Bentley-Norman connection? Only because the first leaks of Bentley's "secret" exposure of Lester Pearson in 1951 mentioned a third party — an unnamed employee of the Canadian Embassy. Little matter that Norman had been located in Ottawa during the years of the alleged Embassy leak, his name had been linked with Pearson's in the press. That, as usual, was plenty for the literary spy-catchers.

In fact, the alleged in-between was Hazen Sise, a representative in the Embassy of the National Film Board. He was never charged but it is possible he had picked up a few tid-bits from "Mike" in corridor talk, or in meetings of the Embassy staff;

Pearson made an art of convincing others that they were hearing precious, inside information, when he never really gave a thing away. Bentley couldn't recall exactly what Sise had brought her, and she had soon dropped him on the grounds that he was having marital problems and seeing a psychiatrist. Assuming Bentley was telling the truth, the "secrets" she obtained could not have been all that great!

The Bentley testimony was a treat, however, for Prime Minister John Diefenbaker who, according to Barros, could only have received his copy from the President or the Secretary of State. (IP March/April 1989) John English, who has examined the copy in the Diefenbaker papers, concluded that the source was most likely "a Canadian journalist with Washington connections." Diefenbaker frequently brought it out for gullible visitors as proof of Pearson's Communistic leaning; in one of the ugliest encounters in Canadian history, he raised it as his response to Pearson's inquiry about Diefenbaker's knowledge of the Munsinger espionage affair. "Mutual blackmail" is the way the exchange has been aptly described. Pearson challenged Diefenbaker to publish the testimony. He had already challenged the State Department to do so. Neither took him up, but it can be read in the John English biography, along with some interesting background. (303-10)

### *Guy Burgess*

THIS SOVIET AGENT was a Cambridge contemporary of Norman's and the two may well have been acquainted. That the relationship was close, as Barros implies (13), is highly unlikely. Even more unlikely is the Barros claim that the two kept in touch after graduation. (13) His only source is a letter he shows as having been received from a British author, Richard Deacon. When I phoned Deacon, he requested a day to check his notes, and then reported that he had no evidence that the two men had been close at Cambridge, and none that they had communicated after graduation.

Norman himself said only that he knew who Burgess was, and did not approve of what he had heard about his life style. He did take part in a march organized by Burgess, but did not mention his name in his letters or testimony about the march. Barros is just guessing when he writes that Burgess "no doubt, had asked [Norman] to participate." (13) "No doubt," a favorite Barros phrase, generally indicates ample doubt, and no evidence.

Norman seems never to have met Donald Maclean, Burgess' partner in treason. Barros "finds it difficult to believe" that they failed to communicate when they headed the American divisions in their respective ministries. This is easy to believe, however, if you know that "American" divisions operate bilaterally with the US, not multilaterally.

### *Kim Philby*

PHILBY, the son of a famous Arabist, became one of the most successful Soviet double agents. He had left Cambridge for Austria months before Norman's arrival.

Returning to London in 1934, he set about developing the cover of a German-sympathising, right-wing journalist. He is reported as having given a talk in Cambridge, and it is *conceivable* that he met Norman. With no evidence whatever, Barros expressed certainty that they *did* meet and added: "Burgess knew Norman and undoubtedly introduced him to Philby." (Letter) Lots of doubt, as it happens.

Shortly before fleeing to the Soviet Union, Philby told Canadian journalist Eric Downton that he had known Norman "vaguely" at Cambridge. Far more exciting was his assertion: "I had a chat with [Norman] in Cairo, not long before his death."

On this foundation, Barros has built the Philby link into one of the five with celebrated agents that render Norman, in his eyes, thoroughly suspect. (IP:24) (The others were Guy Burgess, V. Frank Coe, Chi Ch'ao-tung, and Richard Sorge.) He maintains that Philby could not have been in Cairo on assignment from either of his papers, *The Economist* and *The Observer*, because he could not find his byline during the relevant period. Therefore, Barros reasons, the order to go to Cairo must have come from the Kremlin. And the matter must have been critical if a cherished KGB agent like Philby was to run the risk of visiting Norman while he was under investigation by Congress. What could be *that* important? Barros thinks it was a warning to Norman that he could soon be under irresistible pressure to expose Pearson, an even more precious asset than Norman to the Soviet Union. And what did Norman do shortly thereafter? And had he not said several times before the tragedy that he had to "protect Pearson"? In his letter in *International Perspectives*, in another to me, and more concretely in a long phone call, Barros never quite dotted the i's, but he promoted the idea that Philby had delivered the order that Norman must eliminate himself.

As Downton observes, however, *The Economist* never does give bylines, and both papers frequently attribute to "Our Diplomatic Correspondent" reports from correspondents operating under prickly régimes, like Nasser's. (Letter) It would have been quite normal for any correspondent of *The Economist* and *The Observer* to call on Norman, one of the three top rated Ambassadors in Cairo, and he would have been delighted to receive him or her. They could also have met at a social function, or in Beirut where Norman was also accredited. Any such encounter would not require a report unless the journalist had something new and interesting to say. Even assuming Philby did tell Downton the truth, there was little need to explain to Ottawa. And anyway how does Barros know what Norman reported or did not?

Barros, moreover, might ponder why, if the alleged encounter was so critical to the Kremlin, Philby was talking about it with another journalist, one who was not an intimate friend. And if Norman was the cool, cunning agent portrayed throughout the Barros' book, why did he kill himself? Why not a quick retreat to the Soviet Union, like Burgess, Maclean and Philby himself?



*Richard Sorge*

RICHARD SORGE, an even more influential spy than Philby, fascinated Norman. He was amazed that any Occidental could outwit the extremely efficient Japanese policy and steal military secrets that changed the course of the war. As with many off-beat subjects, Norman knew many details and delighted in telling them to others. The fact that he talked so much about Sorge is one of the reasons Ferns concluded that Norman could not himself be a spy. (223)

Downton once told Norman that he had met Sorge, (a German posing as a journalist) in Shanghai. Norman topped that boast by claiming "he had met him a few times *before the war had put a ban on meetings between nationals of every countries*, and then had often seen him *from a distance* at social occasions ..." (letter, my underlining). Either Downton or Norman was misremembering; it is almost inconceivable that Sorge and Norman could have met "a few times" before the war with Germany started in 1939.

Quite plausible, however, is Norman's sighting of Sorge "from a distance" after he joined the Canadian Legation early in 1940 and before Sorge was executed a year later.

But read how Barros presents the Downton account:

Norman admitted knowing in Tokyo during the war the eminent Russian spy, Victor (sic) Sorge. By this time Sorge had been officially seconded into the press bureau of the Nazi German Embassy. The King of Canada was at war with Nazi Germany and it boggles the imagination that Norman could have maintained contacts with an enemy of the King without instructions from External Affairs. Indeed he never appears to have reported back his contacts with Sorge.

What contacts? Eye contacts? (IP:24) Why should they have been reported? Sorge was then posing as an employee of the press office of the German Embassy, and there were quite a few Germans at Tokyo functions. The charge of "not reported" creates the impression that Barros must have read all the files, which he certainly did not, or at least have consulted the relevant officials, all of whom he in fact avoided.

More serious, by deleting "*before the war had put a ban on meetings*," and then scolding Norman for irresponsible suspicious behaviour, Barros is being blatantly dishonest. As a rule, his devices to incriminate Norman and Pearson are more subtle.

For example, Downton objects vigorously that Barros' misuse of the verb "admitted" makes it seem that Norman was confessing to a wrongdoing, when it was really a boast. (Letter) Barros uses "admitted" many times in the book to achieve just that effect.

*Shigeto Tsuru*

TSURU is a brilliant, highly regarded Japanese economist who was introduced to Norman at Harvard by Robert Bryce, and he remained a close friend.

Tsuru told Norman that, if war came, he could have his splendid collection of Japanese books on politics and economics. The offer was renewed at a 1942 chance encounter in Lourenço Marques, Portuguese East Africa, as the two friends were being repatriated to their respective countries. When Norman went to Boston to take possession of the books, however, an FBI agent had asked so many suspicious questions that Norman decided it would be better to go direct to FBI headquarters.

The encounter became the first significant item on Norman's FBI file, and has been subject to much dispute and embroidery, some, perhaps, by Norman himself. Barros makes much of the incident, he stresses the obvious risk Norman was taking to get the books and his care to keep his "bizarre" conduct from the attention of External. He must have been seeking to recover incriminating documents, Barros reasons, because no one would take such chances merely for a few books. (33-7)

Had Barros dug a bit into the files, however, he would have found a "Dear Mike" letter from Tokyo that boasts of Tsuru's recognition as an economist, and reminds Pearson of the 1942 Boston incident which had obviously been raised before. Even more interesting is a four page telegram from T.A. Stone, Norman's chief in the Examination Unit, sent to Pearson in Washington immediately after the 1942 contretemps in Boston. It gave a detailed account of Norman's difficulty with the FBI agent who had been "polite" but possessed a "cloak and dagger psychology which interprets every isolated fact in a most sinister fashion ... no single fact or person could be mentioned without giving rise to suspicions." Stone supported a strong request to Pearson to intervene directly with J. Edgar Hoover. This Pearson did in a letter describing the collection as the best of its kind outside of Japan, and vital to Norman in the work he was doing in the war against Japan. Hoover replied politely, but the books never reached Canada.

Norman had said he only wanted the Japanese books, not those in other languages, or any papers. He obviously did not know that there were a few embarrassing letters in Tsuru's files. Even Tsuru appears to have forgotten. These enabled the Senate subcommittee to establish in 1957 that Tsuru had lied about not being a Communist Party member, and also that he had had plans to develop his Marxist study group into a Party cell. The Stone-Pearson-Hoover correspondence, however, totally clears Norman of the charges by Barros and the FBI that he had behaved in a suspiciously clandestine manner.

*Anthony Blunt*

BLUNT was already a don by the time Norman reached Cambridge and, even within the Party, there was little fraternization between faculty and student clubs. Blunt became a celebrity both as the Keeper of the Queen's Pictures and a recruiter of other Communist agents, notably Burgess and Maclean. In a deal to escape

prosecution, he tattled to the police about a number of his Communist associates, mostly dead.

Chapman Pincher, who scored a major coup in publicising the Blunt story, reported: "When told of the evidence against Norman ... Blunt said reluctantly 'Herb was one of us,' meaning a recruit to Soviet Intelligence and not just a homosexual, which he also was." (II 417) This was, of course, picked up as true by other literary spy catchers, and was cited by Michael Straight, former editor of *The New Republic*, as his authority for saying that Norman had probably been recruited as an agent. To explain how Blunt had learned of Norman's treason, Barros said "pillow talk," a cheap shot at the alleged love affair between Burgess and Blunt, and a reference to Burgess' alleged friendship with Norman. (There are, incidentally, no serious suggestions that Norman was homosexual.)

A record of an official interrogation of Blunt is on file. It reports that Blunt remembered Norman but "was not quite certain of the context." "Certainly a Communist" he said, "and might have been a Party member at one stage." He thought that "he was relevant to the 'game' [presumably espionage] but could not remember exactly how." Some time later, Blunt recalled that Norman was "definitely in the game" but he didn't know who had recruited him. Burgess, he thought erroneously, had come to Cambridge too late to know Norman.

A hazy witness at best, and it must be remembered that Blunt had earned his freedom by tattling and wanted to please his potential prosecutors with information, true or at least plausible. There had been a great deal of media speculation about the Norman suicide, and most non-Canadians have assumed that it was an admission of guilt. Blunt would not be the only agent to be influenced by the media. John Cairncross, another Cambridge contemporary, who became a mole in the British Treasury, gave similarly vague answers about Norman. He "thought" he had been in the "Circle" but could recall no specifics.

### *Golitsyn*

BARROS frequently misleads the reader by understating the limitations of the single witness he is citing. The most serious example was Anatoly Golitsyn who defected from the Soviet Union in 1961. Barros did indicate that his "vintage" reporting was "very good indeed," implying that it may have soured a trifle with time. Then, without indicating whether he was citing vintage Golitsyn or sour, he quoted the apparently conclusive statement that Norman was "a long term communist and KGB agent." Those damning words form his text for the next thirty pages on Soviet intelligence, suspicious behaviour by Norman, etc. Towards the end Barros boasts that he had extracted a letter from Golitsyn in which he declined to comment on the grounds he was writing a book. Discouraged? Not at all! Since "he was man enough not to deny" the charge against Norman, Barros reasons that it is likely to be true! The logic is a trifle hard to follow.

The greater fault is Barros' failure not to say clearly that Golitsyn had proven to be the most disruptive of all the defectors, and perhaps the most unreliable. Having cast a spell over James Angleton, the head of counter intelligence for the CIA, Golitsyn proceeded to finger over 100 Americans, nearly as many Britons, and dozens in France, Germany, Scandinavia and Canada. Very few of his charges stuck. Nor did his strong insistence that the Czech rising in 1968, and the Sino-Soviet rift, had been faked by the Kremlin to persuade the West to drop its guard. The turmoil he created was enormous. Knowing this, how much credence should anyone, apart from Barros and Nigel West (his single source), give Golitsyn's sweeping allegation against Norman?

Actually, unbeknown to Barros, Golitsyn had given a more revealing statement to the RCMP in 1962 still "vintage?" Asked about Norman's suicide he said: "... I asked myself, is it possible that it can be previous KGB involvement? And I thought when I come to the West I'll find this out. My guessing was at the time that its possible ... that this person is a target from both sides, at first a victim from the KGB, then as a result of persecution, interrogation."

Canadian security officials subsequently interpreted this guessing as evidence that "Golitsyn has no knowledge relevant to the Norman case." He is, of course, far from the only defector whose speculation has been taken as serious evidence by gullible or mischievous members of the literary spy catchers guild.

#### *Gouzenko*

NO OTHER DEFECTOR, or convicted traitor, appears to have accused Norman of being a spy or agent. There remains, however, a curious report by *Gouzenko* of a 1946 query from Moscow to the Embassy: "Do you know Norman?" In reply, Herbert Norman was not even mentioned, but the RCMP nevertheless concluded, not unreasonably, that the Soviets might have been considering him as a desirable recruit. There was no approach that is known and no development. Only Barros now attaches any significance to the cryptic message. (63)

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Page, Don  
Park, Frank  
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Ritchie, Ed.  
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Touzel, Bessie  
Van Dusen, Tom  
Whitaker, Reginald

FOR HELP AND INSPIRATION

Daoust, Sergine  
Dozis, Paulette  
Driedger, Michael  
Eayrs, James  
Farr, David  
Hillmer, Norman  
Marsden, Paul  
Translators

McDonald, Pamela  
Munton, Don  
O'Connor, Terry  
O'Connor, Neil  
Thompson, Ruth and  
her helpful crew

APPENDIX B

SOME PERSONAL REFLECTIONS ON THE BARROS MYSTERY

THE HERBERT NORMAN tragedy was largely caused by the crude, ideological intervention into Canadian affairs by a subcommittee of the United States Senate. This study, ironically, is the result of another crude, ideological, American intervention into our affairs but, I hasten to add, I foresee nothing tragic in the outcome! Indeed, I have enjoyed the assignment, and the contract terms are not unreasonable. I should, perhaps, not look the "Barros gift horse" in the mouth! I nevertheless feel bound to inform the long suffering Canadian tax payer that, but for the passionate agitation of a single foreign professor, this study would almost certainly never have been commissioned.

Among older Canadians, there is clearly considerable curiosity about the Norman case, and many seem pleased that the Rt. Hon. Joe Clark, and the Solicitor General, Hon. Pierre H. Cadieux, opened the relevant External and CSIS files for this study. Younger Canadians, understandably, rarely recognize the Norman name, and in an era of glorious detente, are increasingly blasé about Cold War tales. A couple of sensation seeking columnists, William Stevenson and Peter Worthington, have sought to keep the issue alive, and an occasional editorial writer, on a dull day, has called for an extension of glasnost in our murkiest past. Nowhere,



however, can I detect a groundswell of concern about the true loyalty of Herbert Norman, still less of Lester Pearson. Not even a placard on Parliament Hill!

Professor Barros, however, did enlist two energetic voices in Parliament, M.P.s Alex Kindy and David Kilgour, and their prayers have finally been answered. I'll wager my pension that neither would have spoken out without the inspiration and coaching of Professor James Barros. But what motivates him? I'm at a loss to explain. As the Norman mystery diminishes in my mind, the Barros mystery steadily thickens. A clear statement of purpose from him might help us all to understand a minor but intriguing political event that seems to be without precedent in our history. Who else has ever been hired to examine fifty years of official files to determine if successive governments, both Liberal and Progressive Conservative, have been telling the truth about one, long dead civil servant?

James Barros is not listed in the Canadian Political Science Register, nor in the Canadian *Who's Who*, and I have been unable to obtain his C.V. The biographical sketch found in his recent books deals only with his academic career. It does not mention his work for the United States Government in Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. Barros' other writing appears scholarly, and he is considered to be an interesting and conscientious teacher. But what drove him to write *No Sense of Evil*, and to promote its ugly message so aggressively?

My own experience with Professor Barros is recent. I cannot recall meeting him and apart, from several letters-to-the-editor, I had read nothing by him until I was invited by External to seek an answer to the Norman riddle. I informed Barros that I was doing this study, and would be willing to consider further material. I told him, and others who volunteered information and theories, that I could not enter into a dialogue within them until my report was complete. In addition to three meaty letters, however, I received four conspiratorial telephone calls from Professor Barros. In the last one he said he was sending two more letters; they would be "unsigned but you will know where they come from." Unaccustomed to cloak and dagger, I laughed nervously. He heard. It was the last call, and I never did get the letters. Within a day or two someone was making inquiries in Toronto about my background; he would not leave a name but the number he gave is listed under "Barros."

My experience is not unique. I have talked to a number of authors in Canada, Britain and the United States who all report being pressured by calls or letters from Barros. Three complain that their responses were misrepresented in the book. The most upset is Professor Victor Kiernan of Edinburgh University who holds that Barros misrepresented his inquiries and then seriously misconstrued his statement about Norman by taking words out of context. Well before *No Sense of Evil* appeared, at least one draft of the book was sent to another spy-catcher who made appalling use of it (see below). At least one editor was bullied to withdraw the book from a knowledgeable reviewer. Members of Parliament received pre-publication copies, and those who showed any interest have been "bombarded" with phone calls and briefing notes. I have a set that was sent to David Kilgour, M.P. They

counsel him to take "the moral high ground," and then urge him to mull over the point that, after 33 years, "[Norman's] widow is entitled to know what the government has discovered ..." (Would Barros really like to know what Irene Norman thinks of his interest?)

I cannot imagine what lies behind Barro's apparent anger and passion. Why does he want so badly to destroy further the reputation of a long dead Canadian scholar and diplomat? That his real target is Pearson, as he told me on the phone, does not make understating any easier. He appears not to like Canadians, among whom he has lived for 21 years; he finds insufferable what he sees as our deference to authority, our hypocrisy, our tolerance of traitors, and above all, our "American-bashing." His suspicion — indeed hatred — of the Ottawa mandarins exceeds that of any Albertan. Everything about American politics is at least acceptable (except "McCarthyism," curiously) and everything about the Canadian variety is inferior, if not alarming. At times Barros seems to suggest that the security of Canada, or even the West, is in peril until the awful truth about Pearson and Norman is laid bare. At other times he presents himself as a bold seeker after truth, regardless of the consequences. A clear statement of purpose is obviously in order.

All the commonly heard allegations about Norman's loyalty are found in *No Sense of Evil*, along with a host of new ones. So a critical review may at least contribute to a fuller treatment of the prevailing doubts and accusations. Some of the Barros footnotes, moreover, led me to interesting sources that I would have otherwise missed. He displayed great energy and imagination, but seven hundred footnotes do not a work of scholarship make. The book is neither history nor political science, nor even good journalism. Rather it is unashamedly a blinkered case for the prosecution.

The preface offers a bizarre Gothic image, but no hint of an objective, or hypothesis to be tested, or even a clearly posed question. The conclusion is anti-climactic. It consists of three tame questions that Barros hopes will be asked by one of "Her Majesty's 282 loyal stalwarts" (217) and the suggestion that, whenever the security police and the mandarins are at odds, "either party could appeal for a review by the Privy Councilors of the Security Intelligence Review Committee, established under the Security Intelligence Service Act ..." (201) Barros' letter to *International Perspectives* may offer a better clue to his motivation; there he attributes a devastating review by Professor Michael Fry to the fact that "... I have raised doubts about the loyalty of two stalwarts of the Canadian pantheon."

Some passages in *No Sense of Evil* are factual and fair; most of the book, however, is an unrelenting search for evidence to support a preconceived verdict. Unless the content and footnoting are very deceptive, he has consulted no one who worked with Norman, none of his family, and almost none of his friends (Kiernan is an exception, and perhaps Jaffe). Almost no one was approached who knew him at all well. Barros consulted a few files in Ottawa, and probably members of the security service. He appears to have shunned, however, the rest of the bureaucracy

in the belief that it is a cohesive "Old Boys Club" determined to protect any one of its own against all charges and queries. Despite 21 years in Canada, his knowledge of our history and political system is miniscule, and his logic often baffles.

Let's start the specifics with a case where Barros was relatively honest, but were the consequences of his folly and impatience have been widespread and nasty. On December 16, 1984, William Stevenson, Canada's premier spy catcher, wrote in the *Toronto Sun* that, according to Chapman Pincher, the world champion, there was little doubt that Norman "had worked for the KGB in all three posts" — Tokyo, Wellington and Cairo. Moreover "One recent biographer is convinced [he] ... 'went far to contribute to Moscow's decision to give the North Koreans the green light to invade South Korea ...'."

Sure enough, both allegations are spelled out in Pincher's *Too Little Too Late* (418), but he gives full credit to Barros who in turn had learned from Lester Pearson's *Mike* that General MacArthur had told him and Norman that South Korea lay outside the American defense perimeter. Barros cleverly deduced that if Norman had passed that information to the Kremlin — "and he might have" — that *could* have contributed to the start of the Korea war. In the middle of an otherwise coherent paragraph, however, Barros has inserted the assertion that Secretary of State Acheson had made the *same* statement *in public* a month earlier. (163-4) The Russians could have had this tragically misleading information for the price of a newspaper! Why the now defused paragraph remains is a minor mystery.

But how could Pincher, and through him Stevenson, miss that detail about the Acheson speech? The reason Pincher cited "Barros book," and not *No Sense of Evil*, is that his book appeared two years *before* Barros'! In his eagerness to launch his campaign of calumny, Barros had sent the great Pincher an early draft. When an informed editor or friend called the Acheson speech to Barros' attention, he just shoved in the mention, retained a now nonsensical paragraph, and forgot to alert Pincher. So another nasty myth was born, all because Pincher and Stevenson were trusting, ignorant and lazy, and Barros had been too impatient to get his indictment of Norman into print. A multitude of readers were told that Norman, a gentle scholar and diplomat, was an instigator of an ugly war that caused nearly two million casualties. Pity he is not around to sue.

Pincher and Stevenson were just as unwise to take seriously the Barros' version of another situation, one as comical as Korea was serious. This concerns the allegation that Norman served the KGB while High Commissioner to New Zealand. Their authority is only Barros, who in turn relied totally on a single witness, one directly involved, bitter and eccentric. Her charges are *prime facie* ridiculous, and also could easily have been checked for the price of a couple of phone calls, or a request for the relevant file. But Barros did not want to risk spoiling another discreditable tale, one to which he devotes five pages. His elderly witness is the widow of the High Commissioner who succeeded Norman. They found, she maintains, a residence that reeked of treason. The cook couldn't cook but eavesdropped in both French and English. She and the gardener had been able to

help a neighbour open a sticky safe. They asked questions about private lives, and Norman had answered. He had also been careless with his papers and the key to his filing cabinet. And "if that isn't treason," the widow asked me on the phone, "what is?" Diefenbaker had retired her husband early, and Pearson, although "an old friend" had refused to reopen the case. In view of the fact that Pearson never helped "old friends," Barros implies, here and elsewhere, he must have had a reason other than friendship for his stubborn defence of Norman. What *could* it have been? Barros, might be advised to read a few pages of John English's fine new biography of Pearson to ascertain just how friendly the friendship between Pearson and the High Commissioner had been. (114-5n).

All this is so silly that I often wondered why I was giving *No Sense of Evil* a serious read. The trouble is that too many readers, including Professor Jack Granatstein, consider the book to be respectable history. And David Kilgour M.P. has written the Minister to complain that I have not given the elderly lady a fair hearing. Incidentally, shed no tears for the twice deceived Pincher. His page on Norman features sixteen errors, eight of them gross. And not all of them came from his Toronto co-chaser.

Barros habitually relies on single witnesses, providing they contribute something derogatory about Pearson or Norman. If any one contradicts Norman, he or she is automatically right. Another elderly single witness who earned over five pages was Emma Woikin, the Doukhobor lady who, while a cypher clerk in External, was exposed as a spy by Igor Gouzenko, and served a prison sentence. According to her biographer, June Callwood, Woikin was nearing death when interviewed and living largely on orange juice and alcohol. For years she had enjoyed startling friends by little boasts, such as having been a personal friend of Pierre Trudeau. The story that excited Barros was described by Callwood as "probably an old woman's fantasy" one that "strains credulity." Nothing daunted, Barros insists on telling at length the tale of how Emma entertained to dinner Lester Pearson and Herbert Norman. The account starts on a slightly speculative note but, as so often with Barros, it suddenly leaps into established fact, and is so treated in several references late in the book.

Barros speculated that Emma's own apartment would be a mite tiny, and that she would have to borrow a friend's. Because she knew the Sokolovs of the Soviet Embassy, their home must have been it. Barros then mixes in another dinner he has heard about from Mrs. Igor Gouzenko; it might, he indicates, or might not, be the same one, but a potential Prime Minister was expected. Mrs. Gouzenko, cooked the piroshki at her home to avoid stinking up the Sokolov residence with the aroma of cabbage. It may seem a trifle improbable that a Soviet diplomat would risk entertaining, in a small party, an External cypher clerk who was spying for the Kremlin, and two senior officials from her own department.

But Barros is nothing but serious, and poses the big question: "Was it Pearson or Norman who was being scrutinized?" He decides "Pearson." Although not certain that the hosts saw him as the future Prime Minister, Barros concludes: "It

can be said that eminent Canadians, doubtlessly including Pearson and Norman, were guests at a dinner cooked by Emma Woikin" who herself sat at the table, (162) It is conceivable, he speculates boldly, "that a written report ... was hand-carried to Moscow by Motinov [an Embassy official] in early July ..." (162).

Assuming the improbable that Emma's dinner really did occur, why did it strike our sleuth as being so sinister? The Soviet Union, after all, was at the time Canada's gallant ally. Barros' suspicion was further aroused, however, by a lunch that Pearson had shared with a Soviet diplomat in Washington. He had found him interesting and thought they might meet again. He took the precaution, however, of sending an inquiry to Norman Robertson, the Under-Secretary, about the man's background. It might seem an unusual way to start a *liaison dangereuse*, but not to a professional spy catcher. (Barros 198-9)

A frequent Barros technique to impress the gullible is to describe in a seemingly professional manner the "tradecraft" of the Soviet intelligence service, and then assume that that is what *must* have happened in the "espionage case of Herbert Norman." For example, having explained that every Soviet agent is "run" by a "controller," Barros indulges in eight pages of speculation about who Norman's controllers probably were. (149-59) This is without ever establishing that Norman was an agent. Similarly he raises the question of Norman's "talent spotter," before introducing any evidence that he had in fact been spotted. (7)

Guilt by association, of course, is the sturdiest tool in the spy-catcher kit. In a book devoid of specific deeds, it is employed on almost every page. A gross example is the breathless discovery that Norman had met in his life time five celebrated agents, "Guy Burgess, Chi Ch'ao-ting, V. Frank Coe, Kim Philby and Victor (sic) Sorge." (II.24) Another sinister quintet had loomed large at Cambridge. Noting that five of the student Communists who were there during Norman's time had become Soviet agents within the British Government, Barros wrote: "Certainly, those who maintained that Norman was loyal to his country after entering External Affairs would be positing someone who was truly unique." (137) Slick journalism perhaps, but a social scientist, indeed any serious reader, would want to know the number of Communist students who were at Cambridge in the mid-thirties (about 200), the size of the student body (about 6,000), and the proportion of Cambridge graduates who entered the government service (probably a quarter), before estimating the prospects of any *one* student becoming a traitor. The fact that three of Norman's contemporaries at Cambridge, and two who graduated shortly before he arrived, took that route is interesting but has little statistical significance.

As a fellow traveller for about six years, and then a diplomat for seventeen, Norman met many Communists. Despite Barros' ill-based claims, however, few became close friends, and fewer were kept as friends. Barros relies heavily for information on Philip Jaffe and Patrick Walsh, both of whom became police informers of questionable credibility. The authorities, indeed, even came to doubt Walsh's claim to have been a Communist! Jaffe became bitter when Norman cut

him, and his typescript deposited in the University of Toronto library contains much misinformation. He seems to be the only source for the claim that Chi Ch'ao-ting and V. Frank Coe were Norman "intimates." Norman did keep up with Tsuru, but by 1945 his Party days appeared to be past and he was becoming a highly respected economist and public servant. Barros repeatedly calls attention to Norman's participation in "nocturnal Marxist study groups" in Tokyo. But if they really met "frequently and quite openly" (49) participation hardly squares with the Barros claim that Norman was working in Japan, as elsewhere, as a covert agent for the KGB. Similarly, Norman's reported enthusiasm for the release of two Communist prisoners, sternly reproved by Barros, is not what one might expect of a Soviet agent seeking to maintain cover.

Even more than most Canadians, Barros believes that Canada is run by an "Ottawa establishment," or "Old Boys Club," that protects its own. He produces no evidence or argument, and does not even stumble over the apparent inconsistency of this theory with the unjust treatment, as he sees it, of the High Commissioner to New Zealand, a charter member of the Club. The children of ministers, Barros claims, are automatically accepted as honorary members of the establishment. This is not the place to examine such a proposition, but the implied claim that a privileged background explains how Norman got ahead in the government is patent nonsense. He won competitive scholarships to Cambridge and Harvard where he associated, as we have seen, mostly with non-establishment left-wingers. His entry into External was portrayed by Barros, somewhat inconsistently, and incorrectly, as the result of "assiduous persistence." (29) "He lifted heaven and earth ... to make sure that he was taken on by External Affairs," Barros told David Kilgour, M.P. in a briefing paper. In fact it was clearly a case of External meeting a well-defined need for a specialist in Japanese. No pull was required. The correspondence with the Under-Secretary, Dr. O.D. Skelton, was "diffident, not persistent" (Hillmer, 563) and Barros' notion that the Under-Secretary, because of his own pink past, might have been soft on a young left-winger is laughable; Skelton's doctoral dissertation on Socialism, one that Barros claims was praised by Lenin, was in fact a stringent critique, and Skelton was a strong nationalist and conservative. Moreover, Norman Hillmer, the authority on Skelton, has not been able to find evidence to support the Lenin myth. Alas!

Why did Norman prefer diplomacy to one of the several university chairs he was offered? Barros claims it was because he had been "programmed" at Cambridge, perhaps by "Otto," to become a Soviet mole in the Canadian government. He attaches no importance to the possibility that he didn't like teaching. (Norman had been dismissed from Upper Canada College for inability to keep order, and he disliked speaking to groups.) Nor did Barros consider the large number of scholars, starting with Skelton and Pearson, who preferred Parliament Hill and proximity to power, to the Ivory Tower. Norman, moreover, was sufficiently a genius to have it both ways; he could succeed as a diplomat, *and* remain a prolific, world renowned scholar in his chosen field.

Why did Pearson defend him? Barros suggests that it was partly because their fathers were both Methodist ministers, but even more because Pearson and Norman were both Soviet sympathisers. He cannot recognize that Pearson, and others in the Department, considered Norman to be an outstanding official, and loyal to Canada; not to defend him would have been both unjust and very damaging to morale in the Department. He does note that Pearson defined the issue as one of national sovereignty, and was angered by the gross meddling by a witch-hunting Congressional committee. So too was most of Canada, a fact that Pearson the politician could not ignore.

On Anti-Americanism, Barros becomes insufferable. The row over Norman's death, he contends, was inflamed if not invented by the government. It was just another instance of "American bashing ... an old and honorable tradition in Canada and often politically lucrative to boot." (130, 127) He claims that the British had given Ottawa more damaging evidence than had the Americans, but had been spared our criticism. "Denigrating the English cousin," he explained "was less productive than denigrating the American neighbour." It matters naught, it seems, that the "cousin" had conveyed his information through quiet, proper channels, and had corrected it when new material, less damaging to Norman, came in. Our "neighbour," by contrast had misused Canada's own information, invented false evidence, and, contrary to a specific promise, blasted it out into the world media; the "neighbour" was thus very largely responsible for the death of one of Canada's best and brightest. Reading Barros on "American bashing" inclines me to become a basher too.

As Barros' own case shows, it is quite possible to live 20 years in a foreign country and remain loyal to one's own. However, being *born* and raised abroad, he contends, is totally different. Norman's home in Japan was Canadian, and he attended the Canadian Academy in Kobe; Barros nevertheless charges that his loyalty was less than that of "the youths of his day who, growing up in Canada, daily savoured the loyalty symbols that bound them to the Crown: the rendering of *God Save the King* and seeing the Union Jack on the flagpole flapping in the wind." (10) "Though legally a Canadian national, he became an individual whose absorbed values made him something less than that." (9) While at Harvard, it seems, he even "attempted to acquire American nationality." (10) Barros has only the erratic Jaffe as a source for that improbability.

Pearson joins Norman under the cloud of suspicion because Methodism, the faith of their fathers that they both had abandoned, had introduced them to inflammatory ideas about social justice and internationalism. (10) In explaining how Pearson could have become "Moscow's ultimate mole," or at least "an unconscious ideological sympathiser," Barros brought up the "social gospel, which, no doubt, prevailed in the Methodist household in which he was raised," and is reflected in Pearson's memoirs "when he speaks of midnight discussions with College friends over the follies of politics that led to war but neglected the evils of poverty and injustice." (201) Dangerous stuff Methodism!

As we have seen, Norman became for several years a distressingly doctrinaire Communist. Even then, however, he firmly rejected historical determinism and warned that there might well be retrogression in human development. Indeed, a Nazi Europe loomed as real possibility. Right in the preface to his first book he had written "... one need not admit ... any ineluctable determinism in the affairs of men and states." Barros has no authority for claiming that: "Norman believed in the great march of history ... No matter what he did, not matter how illegal it was, it could be justified ideologically and psychologically. The laws of communism's dialectical materialism were higher than those governing Canada, higher than any secrecy oath, and greater than thoughts of national security." (184) Those lines are so foreign to Norman's character and recorded thought that they constitute libel. Norman had a well-developed sense of right and wrong, good and evil. The author of *No Sense of Evil* might reflect on King Gordon's magnificent report on Norman's state of mind two days before the suicide. Norman had spoken of the Senate investigation as "evil, as if it were an incarnate thing ... as capable of destroying life, of destroying the world." And when he had earlier heard of the death of the Chairman of the Subcommittee, he permitted himself the rare luxury of a harsh quip: "Where there is death there is hope."

Speaking of evil, ponder Barros' response to Joe Clark's cool rejection of his demand, conveyed by Dr. Alex Kindy, M.P., for an explanation of why he was protecting "a former mole of the Soviet KGB." Clark replied: "it would be unnecessary and unworthy to raise 30-year-old questions here in the House." Barros shot back, in the second edition of his book: "... even after forty years, the government, rightly, has no compunction to bring up the issue of war crimes committed elsewhere. Is espionage against Canada a less serious crime?" (221)

Some lighter, lesser items: why does Barros always dignify Robert Morris, the Chief Counsel to the Senate subcommittee that hounded Norman, with the title "Judge?" Morris, it is true, had served as a local magistrate but all the journalists, other authors, and colleagues address him simply as "Robert Morris" or "Bob." Is Barros seeking to camouflage the fact that Morris' conduct was the very opposite of judicial? And why does he so often refer to the "King of Canada" when everyone I know would just say "Canada?" Could he be teasing? And surely he cannot be serious about the suggestion that Washington might well have given Pearson "misleading information" "in the hope that he would convey it to Moscow." "Regrettably," he adds, "the theory cannot be tested at present." (216)

Perhaps he isn't kidding. As diplomatic historian Michael Fry has shown (*International Perspectives* March/April 1989), Barros has not the slightest understanding of Canada's place in the diplomacy of the Atlantic triangle. In particular, he misconstrues Pearson and the way he was regarded in London and Washington. He never sought a fight but, backed by most Canadians, he often opposed the old fashioned power-oriented politics favoured by our closest allies, as seen for example in Britain's invasion of Egypt along with France and Israel, and MacArthur's disastrous march towards the Yalu River in the Korean War. Despite



the jaunty manner, Pearson was serious, widely respected and tough; the Achesons and Edens could often only respond with caustic insults. They thought him overly eager to build bridges to the Third World, but never, never made the mistake, as repeatedly claimed by Barros, of thinking that the leading architect of NATO was soft on Communism. Barros' notion that Eden had been warned about Norman, and the Bentley allegations about Pearson, and that this explains why the British during the Suez Crisis asked the Swiss rather than the Canadians to represent them in Cairo, is ludicrous. If Canada's policies were a consideration, surely its objection to Eden's disastrous Suez involvement is the obvious explanation. (205)

The following paragraph must be read with care in order to appreciate the intensity of Barros' suspicion of External Affairs:

The document of which only a photocopy of the original is available for examination, appears to have been produced on the same typewriter as the one Inspector MacNeil used for his previous communications with External Affairs. Photocopies of these documents were submitted to Donald N. Brown of the Pacific Forensic Science Consultants and Services Ltd. and, after close examination and in-depth comparison, Brown concluded that there was "some evidence to indicate that ALL of the typewriting" on the submitted exhibits "could have been executed by one and the same typewriter." However, unless the originals of that document and of those sent previously by MacNeil can be examined by an expert such as Brown, it would be unwise to categorically state that all these communications were produced on the same typewriter. (77)

The document under professional examination is the draft of the December 1, 1950 report sent by the RCMP to the FBI to correct its very inaccurate and damaging report of October 17. It was accepted by some in the U.S. security community, but never by the Senate subcommittee on Internal Security, where it really mattered. Barros, too, much preferred the first flawed version, and could not believe that the Mounties had been honestly persuaded to change it by mere fact and reason. Perhaps they were outwitted by those over-educated Oxbridge "Old Boys" in External, or at least overawed by them. Perhaps Pearson had coerced them with superior political power. Perhaps the Mounties never wrote the report. Perhaps External .... (Before laughing, recall that it was a typewriter that trapped Alger Hiss!)

For all of Barros' evident anger at Norman and Pearson, his specific categorization of their roles was surprisingly mild. "There are agents of influence," he explained, "who *consciously* collaborate to advance the objectives of a foreign power but who are not formally recruited and controlled!" They can be held to be 'unwitting but manipulated' individuals; *Norman would clearly fall into that category.*" (144) (my underlining) "Unwitting?" Did the awesomely cerebral Herbert Norman accomplish all that monstrous treachery without being aware of what he was doing? Are we to forgive him because he knew not what he did? While answering that, Barros might tell us how Pearson could be "an unconscious

ideological sympathiser.” (201) Failing to be conscious of one’s sympathies seems a common frailty. But to be “unconscious[ly] ideological” fair boggles the mind, to borrow a favorite Barros’ expression.

This review, although longer than the book deserves, has far from exhausted its deceits, flaws, follies, and boners. Clearly it had made me chuckle as often as I have boiled. I was tempted to write that *No Sense of Evil* is an evil book. Its destructiveness is repugnant, its means often despicable. His passionate campaign to project his message, even by getting it first into the books of others, is unlike any I’ve ever encountered in academe.

My primary reaction, however, remains puzzlement. How can the author of several serious, scholarly works, a man holding an adequately paid position at Canada’s premier English-speaking university, produce a book that is as incompetent in execution as it is unworthy in apparent purpose? Although Barros condemns Senator McCarthy (212) and even suggests that he be awarded the Lenin prize for his disservice to American democracy, this book reminds many of McCarthyism. The criticism is not entirely fair. McCarthy believed little of what he was saying, and did no research. Barros does believe — but what? — and has expended an enormous amount of effort, imagination and passion. Sad that it could not have been committed to a worthier purpose.

Puzzling too has been Barros’ success in gaining a serious hearing from a couple of Members of Parliament, other spy chasing authors, and even some Toronto academics. Could there be in Toronto an “Old Boys Club” out to protect one of its own?

Peyton Lyon

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