

# Wielding CBC's "Voice of Canada" as a weapon of Cold War propaganda

Throughout the Cold War, Canada's Department of External Affairs wielded the CBC's International Service (CBC-IS)<sup>1</sup> as a propaganda weapon in what it called "political warfare." The CBC-IS (aka "The Voice of Canada") was, Liberal Foreign Minister Lester Pearson boasted in 1951, "doing valuable work for Canada and playing a useful part in the psychological war against communism." As he explained to the House of Commons, this "psychological war" is "an important part of the total war against communism—the struggle or the battle for men's minds."<sup>2</sup>

As Canada's leading Cold Warrior, Pearson was key to orchestrating the psy-war operations of a top-secret interdepartmental group called the "Psychological Warfare Committee."<sup>3</sup> Like others dedicated to fighting what he called the "total war against communism," Pearson's dream was not only to collaborate in the subversion, breakup and eventual destruction of the Soviet Union, he also wanted to rid the entire world (including Canada) of all communists.

Although planning for the CBC's international reach began in the late 1930s, not until 1942 did Prime Minister Mackenzie King issue an order-in-council to create

it. Two years later, just as the Soviets were finishing the liberation of Eastern Europe, having forced the Nazi war machine back to Germany's borders, the CBC-IS began broadcasting. It was Christmas Day, 1944. From head offices in a former Montreal brothel,<sup>4</sup> the CBC-IS began its military mission to beam messages in English and French to Canadian soldiers, and in German to Nazi troops. But with the Allied victory almost complete, CBC-IS broadcasts soon made an about-face. Canada's German-language transmissions quickly redirected their propaganda attacks against the citizens of East Germany, and communism across Eastern Europe became Canada's prime target.

The first language to be added to CBC-IS broadcasts was Czech. This began in 1946 because Czechoslovakia's communist party won that year's democratic election. To anticommunists around the world, the communists' election victory was an intolerable precedent to be nipped in the bud. Canada soon began a steady barrage of politically abusive Czech programming. Commenting on these broadcasts, an article in the Czechoslovak daily, *National Liberation* said "from Canada we hear nothing except

large doses of anti-Soviet insults and a lot of slander against people's democracies." This harsh critique of Canadian propaganda was later quoted by CBC-IS director Ira Dilworth as proof that Canada was doing an excellent job fighting the global war against communism.<sup>5</sup>

In 1946, after four years at Canada's embassy in Washington, Pearson became the deputy minister of External Affairs and helped to oversee Canada's proUS, Cold War agenda. This included ramping up CBC-IS propaganda. After adding Czech broadcasts, CBC-IS began programming in Dutch and three Scandinavian languages, as well as in English to the Caribbean, and in Portuguese and Spanish to Latin America.

CBC broadcasts to "America's backyard" were in tune with US offensives assailing popular left-wing liberation movements. Besides using economic and propaganda weapons, the US pushed the West's twisted ideas of "freedom" and "democracy" by rigging elections, fomenting coups, waging counterinsurgency wars and launching invasions to install brutal, far-right dictatorships. The US propped up its business-friendly client states, and their terrorist death

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- Tory Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden (1911-20), who became its first president in 1928.
46. Pearson 1970, *op. cit.*, p.75.
47. *Ibid.*
48. Pearson, April 10, 1951, *op. cit.*
49. "The power of holding two contradictory beliefs in one's mind simultaneously, and accepting both.... To tell deliberate lies while genuinely believing in them, to forget any fact that has become inconvenient." George Orwell, 1984, 1949, p.220. [bit.ly/1984-DT](http://bit.ly/1984-DT)
50. Author's collection of news articles, Jul. 31-Aug.3, 1967 [bit.ly/freeQuebec](http://bit.ly/freeQuebec)
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52. Gordon Pape, "Full Acceptance of French a Requirement says Pearson," *Montreal Gazette*, Aug.1, 1967, p.2. [bit.ly/Aug1-1967](http://bit.ly/Aug1-1967)
53. "PM Stresses Political Unity to Ukrainians," *Calgary Herald*, Jul.31, 1967, p.9. [bit.ly/ch-67](http://bit.ly/ch-67)
54. Pearson, Apr. 10, 1951, *op. cit.*
55. Pearson 1970, *op.cit.*, p.112.
56. "Pearson Hits Prog. Cons.," *Winnipeg Free Press*, Feb. 5, 1949, p.6. [bit.ly/Christ-vs-Reds](http://bit.ly/Christ-vs-Reds)
57. John English, "Pearson, Lester Bowles," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, 2003-[bit.ly/EdwinP](http://bit.ly/EdwinP)
58. Pearson 1970, *op.cit.*, p.113.
59. Lester Pearson, cited by B.T.R., "Need we Fight the Russians?" *Ottawa Citizen*, Nov. 16, 1949, p.30. [bit.ly/OC11-16-49](http://bit.ly/OC11-16-49)

## Pearson College and NATO's United World Colleges

### The UWC's NATO origins

In 2017, Pearson College in BC, a Canadian government-funded member of the United World Colleges (UWC) "movement," co-hosted an event with Global Affairs Canada at which then-foreign minister Chrystia Freeland celebrated Pearson as a "Canadian Icon" who promoted "peace, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law around the world."<sup>1</sup>

Pearson College president, Désirée McGraw,<sup>2</sup> a prominent Liberal, noted that Freeland is "an alumna of UWC Adriatic and a good and knowledgeable friend of the College and the UWC movement [who] spoke at this event to recognize her predecessor."<sup>3</sup>

Now-deputy prime minister, Freeland was a student at UWC Adriatic in Italy during her teens (1984-86).<sup>4</sup> The UWC network of elitist boarding schools has shaped the minds of all manner of celebrities, royal-family members and other agents of influence. UWC alumni from its eighteen colleges on four continents include those who have become heads of state, political decision makers, CEOs, venture capitalists, religious and military leaders, influential artists, actors and powerful members of the Fifth Estate. Besides training privileged kids of the world's power elites, whose sponsors pay \$100,000 for a two-year degree, the UWC also allows some refugees on scholarships to represent carefully selected war zones.

British Air Marshal Sir Lawrence Darvall played a key role in creating the UWC. In 1955, UWC founder, Kurt Hahn, "visited the NATO Defense College in Paris" where Darvall was commandant. There, Hahn "was inspired by the cooperation and loyalty to a common cause that he witnessed among military men who had been adversaries in World War Two."<sup>5</sup> The military enemies who "inspired" Hahn with their "cooperation and loyalty" to NATO, included officers from Italy and Germany, which joined NATO in 1949 and 1955. Their "common cause" in NATO was a seething hatred of communism, both at home and abroad. NATO embraced fascists and Nazis, and their East European collaborators, because they wanted to continue fighting the USSR.

Hahn, a German nationalist, converted from Judaism after WWII. "I am of the firm opinion," he said, "that you can fight Communism only on a Christian basis."<sup>6</sup>

The second factor that "laid the foundation of the UWC movement" was the "rapidly developing relationship" between Hahn and Darvall. One of their goals was to bring together promising young men in a milieu of proNATO/antiSoviet ideologies and to groom them for leadership roles. This "led directly to the concept of Atlantic College."<sup>7</sup>

squads, with money, military training, arms, diplomatic support and anti-Red propaganda.<sup>6</sup> Blatant US interference in Latin American politics was replicated around the world and has continued to this day, with much support from NATO allies like Canada.

In early 1947, Pearson initiated a policy group to provide guidelines for the DEA's propaganda efforts. Canadian historian Gary Evans notes that according to these



guidelines, the function of the Psychological Warfare Committee was

to undermine and disrupt by overt/covert means enemy morale and to 'sustain and foster the morale and spirit of resistance of our friends in enemy-occupied countries.'<sup>7</sup>

In 1948 the department increased Canada's propaganda war against its communist enemies. The impetus for this came in February, when massive rallies and strikes involving millions of people, supported Czechoslovakia's elected, communist government in an effort to consolidate its pow-

er. In March, Canadian Cold Warriors reacted to this "coup" by suggesting that the department "prepare recommendations ... to set up for wartime propaganda purposes."<sup>8</sup> Pearson set up a special group to "report on the desirability and practicability of using the [CBC] International [Service] for political warfare."<sup>9</sup> In April, he met with top department and CBC officials to escalate Canada's psychological war against "countries dominated by Communist regimes."<sup>10</sup>

By July, the department produced a detailed report outlining strict lines of authority and control over CBC-IS propaganda. This report was couched in extremist, Cold War language that divided the planet into two opposing camps: the "active, free, civilised nations" of the capitalist world, and their archenemies, the "totalitarian regimes" of the socialist world. Ironically, the department's report concluded that it was important not to create "the impression in the minds of [CBC-IS] listeners that the service was an agency of propaganda,"<sup>11</sup> even though it was explicitly designed, organized and funded to fulfil that very purpose.

By 1950 the department had further tightened its grip on the CBC-IS. A declassified memo from undersecretary of state

Since WWII Canada has gone far beyond mere meddling in foreign politics to assisting US-led wars and regime changes camouflaged as missions for peace and democracy.

**Propaganda is central.**

As Foreign Minister Pearson said in 1951, **CBC International** was "playing a useful part in the **psychological war against communism**" and was "an important part of the **total war against communism.**"

Atlantic College, the UWC's flagship, is housed in a 12th-century Welsh castle that was owned by US media mogul, William R. Hearst, in the 1930s. There he had such guests as Frank Sinatra, Clark Gable, Winston Churchill, Joseph P. Kennedy, his wife and their teen John F. Kennedy. Hahn and Darvall's dream turned Hearst's palace into an "international boarding school with boys in their formative years."<sup>8</sup> Thus began an "international education system with the NATO Defense College at the apex," said US Col. Richard Stillman, "to prepare students for their role in NATO affairs."<sup>9</sup>

The UWC's global presidents have included such royal, military luminaries as Lord Mountbatten (1968-77).<sup>10</sup> This followed his stint as chair of NATO's Military Committee, and his role as the longest-serving chief of Britain's "Defence Staff."

### Pearson UWC praises Trudeau

Formed in 1974, with groundwork laid by NATO co-founder, Lester B. Pearson, the "UWC of the Pacific," Pearson College, is a significant part of the UWC movement. In March 2016, Pearson UWC president McGraw addressed the Canadian International Council<sup>11</sup> in Victoria. She began by saying it was "an honour" to be there on:

such an auspicious day with the announcement by our Prime Minister that Canada is

making a bid to take a seat on the UN Security Council beginning in 2021!

McGraw then praised Trudeau for his "often repeated declaration that **Canada is back.**" This, she said, was "music to the ears"

of all of us who care about Canada's role on the world stage—a role which has been severely diminished by successive governments since the glory days of the last half of the 20th century.<sup>12</sup>

During those "glory days" of "Pearsonian Internationalism," Liberal governments distinguished themselves as loyal Cold Warriors, and provided as much support as they could to US-led wars and coups while still billing themselves as global guardians of peace and justice. Liberal governments of the 21st century continue this noble tradition of hypocrisy and duplicity.

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3. Désirée McGraw, "Celebrating a Canadian Icon and Raising Awareness," Pearson College, Dec. 15, 2017. [bit.ly/PearsonMcGraw](http://bit.ly/PearsonMcGraw)



4. UWC Adriatic, Alumni Profiles [bit.ly/UWCAD](http://bit.ly/UWCAD)
5. UWC History & Founding Ideas [bit.ly/UWCHist](http://bit.ly/UWCHist)
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11. McGraw is a former advisor of CIC Mtl. CIC, which calls itself "Canada's premier forum for global affairs," is a propaganda mill created by elite politicians, businessmen and media moguls. Pearson's mentor, Tory PM Sir Robert Borden (1911-20) became its first president in 1928.
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Arnold Heeneey to CBC General Manager August Frigon detailed the department's "policy objectives." A key purpose of CBC-IS, he stated, was to "participate actively on behalf of Canada in the Cold War." This, Frigon said, meant that:

In prosecuting the Cold War...the CBC-IS...should...win over the waverers in countries where the battle is more clearly joined, bring over to our side the neutrals, and get the better of our opponents....<sup>12</sup>

While the CBC-IS promoted the delusion that the US-led "free world" was a beacon of democracy, it hypocritically waged propaganda wars to interfere in Western Europe's elections. This subversion of democracy was most aggressive where voters threatened to vote communists into power. To avoid such perceived disasters, the department dictated how CBC-IS propaganda warriors should tailor their broadcasts to swing the vote in "countries with large communist parties like France and Italy." CBC propaganda aimed at such countries, said

Heeneey, had to "show proud peoples what happens when native communists seize the reins of power and then immediately transfer them to the Kremlin's iron grasp..." CBC-IS broadcasts to Italy and France, Heeneey said, had to have messages that "strive constantly to identify communism as an instrument of Soviet imperialism" and "unmask the hypocrisy of communist 'democracy' in elections, trade unions, labour camps, religion, etc. and the hypocrisy of Soviet peace propaganda."<sup>13</sup>

In 1950, the US and UK asked Canada to aim Russian-language propaganda at the USSR. Foreign Affairs' report (*Psychological Warfare: CBC-IS Russian Service*) wanted broadcasts to show "the good in our way of life and the evil in the Soviet way." The goal was "undermining the morale, faith and determination of the people of the Soviet Union who actively or passively sup-

port Soviet policies."

Another goal was to tell the war-weary USSR (which had just lost 27 million citizens to defeat Nazism) "that they cannot hope to win a new world war." If this threat was not enough, Foreign Affairs told CBC-IS to warn that "the Soviet regime (and its attendant satellite regimes)" would be "solely responsible for war should it come." Ironically, the department's good-vs-evil tirades were also aimed at "convincing the Russians ...of our peaceful, unag-

gressive purpose."<sup>14</sup>

Foreign Affairs' directives also linked Christianity to the other "general lines" of propaganda that CBC-IS was told to follow. In a 1951 speech to parliament, Pearson, then Foreign Minister, cited department guidelines that CBC-IS broadcasts should be "keeping alive and if possible increasing a knowledge of and appreciation of democracy, the code of ethics we have derived from Christianity and western civilization and thought."<sup>15</sup>

**UKRAINE:  
Cold War  
wedge**



RS

**NATIONAL COMMITTEE  
FOR A FREE EUROPE**



**WEAPON  
in the struggle  
for freedom**



### **US Big Brother to Canadian propagandists:**

**'Voice of America' & the CIA's 'Radio Free Europe' and 'Radio Liberation from Bolshevism'**

**D**uring the Cold War, America's three largest overseas propaganda venues were Voice of America (VOA), Radio Free Europe (RFE) and Radio Liberty (RL). These mass media assets are still active, avidly pushing US geopolitical and corporate interests, including pretexts for wars, invasions and regime change operations.

These networks still push US-government propaganda under the guise of advocating democracy,

human rights and the truth. But only the VOA was truthful enough to admit that it was state financed. Beginning in 1942 under the Office of War Information, the VOA now has a US\$200-million budget to broadcast propaganda in 45 languages to 270 million people per week.<sup>1</sup>

RFE/RL began in 1949 as covert creatures of the CIA. Funding came through a CIA front groups, the National Committee for a Free Europe. This was revealed in the late 1960s but continued until 1972 when Congress began covering its budget. Still proud of its role in the Cold War, the RFE/RL's website now brags that the "news and information" it aimed at "audiences behind the Iron Curtain," "played a significant role in the collapse of communism...."<sup>2</sup>

While the state-owned VOA has always broadcast globally, the RFE targeted communist Eastern Europe, and RL focused its psychological warfare against Soviet citizens. RL's original name was "Radio Liberation from Bolshevism." After some controversy this was changed in 1963. Former RFE/RL president Sig Mickelson explained why, saying the network's organisers "seemed unaware that 'Bolshe-

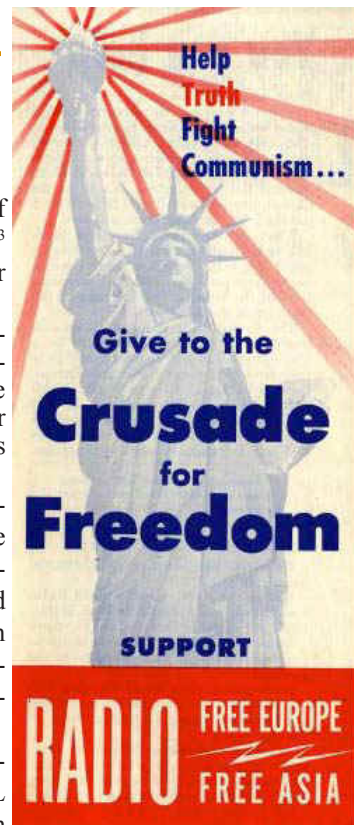
vism' had been Hitler's favorite term of disparagement for the Soviet Union."<sup>3</sup> As US media professor Christopher Simpson pointed out, the USSR:

lost no time in pointing out the rhetorical similarity between Radio Liberation's broadcasts and those of the Nazis as well as the fact that a number of easily identified Nazi collaborators were working for the station.<sup>4</sup>

Using the word "Bolshevism, a term favored by Nazi propagandists in the Ukraine ... turned into an embarrassment." RFE/RL was "eventually forced to ban the use of the term *Bolshevism* in their news broadcasts because of its unmistakable association with Nazi propaganda in the minds of European[s]."<sup>5</sup>

This change did not stop the far-right CIA front group running RFE/RL from using other forms of vilification used by the Nazis. Its biggest propaganda campaign in the 1950s, "Crusade for Freedom," employed Ronald Reagan as its spokesman. With slogans like "Help truth fight communism" and "This world under God shall have a new birth of freedom" they used every dirty trick in the CIA toolkit. This global "crusade" was the brainchild of Frank Wisner, the CIA's Chief of Covert Action. By 1951, he was in charge of all of the Agency's clandestine operations worldwide.

During WWII, Wisner had worked for the CIA's precursor, the Office of Strategic Services, and headed its secret operations in the Balkans. This led to his Cold War duties for the CIA, which in-



## Using Ukraine as a wedge to divide and conquer the enemy

To promote their Cold War objectives, Foreign Affairs and CBC-IS worked closely with Canada's anticommunist Ukrainian émigré groups which still revere Nazi collaborators as WWII heroes.

In 1951, to prepare for beaming Ukrainian-language propaganda at Soviet citizens, the CBC-IS sent Walter Schmolka to meet top officials at the Voice of America (VOA) in New York. Schmolka, who had overseen the CBC-IS's Czech broadcasts since their inception, reported that the VOA stressed "the general fight for freedom and the struggle against Communism."<sup>16</sup> Elbieta Olechowska, a media scholar at the University of Warsaw, noted that Schmolka assumed that the CBC-IS

should adopt holus-bolus the VOA program policy, without a single question being asked or a single doubt expressed about its suitability for Canada.<sup>17</sup>

In assessing how to wage a "political war" against the USSR, senior Foreign Affairs staffer Robert Mackay wrote that "Canada's large Ukrainian community

would provide good propaganda material." He also noted the suggestion of an age-old, divide-and-conquer tactic. "One of the best ways of working for and securing peace," he said, "would be to break up the Soviet Union into a large number of successor states; Ukrainian nationalism was deserving of support with this in mind."<sup>18</sup> MacKay also noted the idea that an "effective means" of opposing the USSR was to "appeal to those Soviet minorities ... above all the Ukrainians, who were already conducting underground resistance to Muscovite Russian rule."<sup>19</sup>

On August 8, 1951, department officials advised Foreign Minister Pearson to approve the CBC-IS's Ukrainian-language broadcasts, and on the next day he agreed. Throughout this process, External Affairs was in touch with far-right Ukrainian groups eager to help the CBC-IS with antiSoviet broadcasts. Leading this charge was the Canadian League for the Liberation of Ukraine, renamed the League of Ukrainian Canadians (LUC) in 1991. It still represents Stepan Bandera's faction of the fascist Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists within the

**"One of the best ways of working for and securing peace, would be to break up the Soviet Union into a large number of successor states; Ukrainian nationalism was deserving of support with this in mind."**

**Robert Mackay, 1951**

**Senior bureaucrat, Dep't of External Affairs**

Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC). The UCC is the umbrella group for anticommunist Ukrainians created by Mackenzie King's government in 1940.

In 1951, the League collected 12,000 signatures on a petition and urged readers of its pro-Bandera *Ukrainian Echo* to lobby government officials to fund Ukrainian-language programs attacking the USSR. The CBC-IS asked LUC and similar Ukrainian émigré groups and their churches to suggest who should run the new Ukrainian-language division. For input, Pearson consulted John Decore, a far-right Ukrainian-Canadian Member of Parliament.<sup>20</sup>

In his 1981 MA thesis on the CBC-IS "as a psychological instrument of Canadian foreign policy," lawyer and law professor Bernard Hibbitts noted that his re-

cluded: (1) Recruiting Nazis and their fascist East European allies to continue fighting communism through new careers in the CIA, (2) Creating the CIA's vast RFE/RL propaganda network, and (3) Leading "Project Mockingbird," a CIA effort that co-opted reporters and editors to spread right-wing disinformation through many global mass-media outlets.<sup>6</sup> Referring to these assets as his "Mighty Wurlitzer,"<sup>77</sup> Wisner targeted nonstop CIA propaganda at the Allies' strongest WWII partner, and biggest Cold War enemy, ie., the USSR.

RFE/RL has long aided the careers of select journalists. In 1990, as the USSR's destruction neared, Chrystia Freeland (now deputy PM) and former RFE/RL employee David Marples (now a Univ. of Alberta prof), interviewed a founder of Ukraine's separatist movement. Freeland, then a student meddling in Ukraine's Soviet elections, had this RFE/RL interview published in *Ukrainian Weekly*. This US paper has run thousands of RFE/RL stories and promoted Ukrainian SS vets as heroes. RFE/RL printed the Freeland/Marples piece in one of its journals and one of its books.

By about 1990, Hungarian-born, US billionaire George Soros was funding Ukrainian dissidents. Seeking advice on this, Soros consulted Freeland in Kiev, using her knowledge of the Ukrainian nationalists. (This began their decades-long collaboration.) After rising through the Kremlin-bashing mass media, Freeland was recruited into Liberal politics by Justin Trudeau. Elected in 2013, she support the violent Euromaidan coup that overthrew Ukraine's elected antiNATO government. That coup empowered a regime "riddled with explicit anti-semites and self-proclaimed neo-Nazis."<sup>78</sup> Ten years earlier, Soros had also funded Ukraine's 2004 "Orange-Revolution" that empowered a corrupt, proNATO government.

Now financed by private sources, notably George Soros' Open Society Foundations, RFE/RL continues to champion US government policies and corporate interests. With 600+ employees and an annual budget of US\$124 million, RFE/RL broadcasts in 26 languages and reaches an audience of 34 million/week.<sup>9</sup> While the RFE/RL's Cold War propaganda made frequent reference to the "Free World" and the

so-called "Subjugated" or "Captive Nations" of the USSR, these phrases have been replaced by the Soros Foundations mantras about "Open Societies" and "Unfree Societies." But now that America's new Cold War with Russia has taken hold, the main target of US/NATO propaganda still remains Moscow's Kremlin.

Because of their meddling in civil society and elections, the Soros-funded foundations have faced censure in Serbia, Macedonia and Turkey. Soros Foundations have been banned in Hungary and Russia. In 2015, Russia's Office of the Prosecutor General called these Soros groups "a threat to the foundations of the constitutional system of the Russian Federation and the security of the state."<sup>10</sup>

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**Spawned by the CIA in 1949, RFE/RL employed Nazi collaborators from Eastern Europe who continued their intense propaganda war to destroy Soviet communism**

In the CBC-IS's first Ukrainian-language propaganda program (July 1, 1952), Soviets heard Cold War diatribes from foreign minister Lester Pearson, two priests and two Ukrainian-Canadian MPs, including Mike Starr, who said:

*"The time will come when the spirit of freedom penetrates the Iron Curtain of oppression, the prison of nations crumbles and the regime of terror disintegrates under the blows of victorious forces of freedom and democracy."*

In 1958, cabinet minister Mike Starr spoke at the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations conference in Toronto.

In 1986, he received an award from the Ukrainian Canadian Congress—Alberta.

In 2014, his name was invoked by MPs who unanimously backed the proNATO, Euromaidan coup that put Ukrainian neoNazis into key cabinet positions.



**Mike Starr**

aka Michael Starchewsky

search focused on the influence which East European ethnic groups in Canada especially the Ukrainians exercised over policy, and shows how, in the end, they made of [CBC] IS a 'twisted arm' of Canadian statecraft.<sup>21</sup>

That this arm was twisted was clear from the extreme Cold War polemics of its first Ukrainian broadcast. The July 1, 1952, program had Canada Day messages from Pearson, two Ukrainian priests and two Progressive Conservative MPs of Ukrainian heritage: John Decore and Mike Starr. In this opening salvo of Canada's CBC-IS propaganda war against Soviet Ukraine, Starr launched a full-throttle McCarthyesque rant. After telling Soviet citizens in Ukraine not to "lose courage" because "the free world has not forgotten you," Starr said:

Canadian Ukrainians deplore that you our brother Ukrainians in Ukraine, do not have the right to a full political, national and personal life such as we enjoy in Canada .... The time will come when the spirit of freedom penetrates the Iron Curtain of oppression, the prison of nations crumbles and the regime of terror disintegrates under the blows of victorious forces of freedom and democracy.<sup>22</sup>

As a cabinet minister under Prime Minister John Diefenbaker in 1958, Starr was a key speaker at the Canadian conference of the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations (ABN).<sup>23</sup> In 1967, Starr spoke in New York, NY, at the First World Congress of Free Ukrainians<sup>24</sup> which united Banderite émigré groups around the world and was a central force within the ABN.

## Purging "pinkos" from Canada and the world

At home in the "free world," where Starr said all Canadians enjoyed "full political, national and personal" freedoms, External Affairs was purging CBC-IS staff who sympathized with leftist politics, cleansing the service of those who did not fit their right-wing mould. In 1952, the department put a hardened Cold Warrior, Jean Désy, in charge of CBC-IS. It also created a "Political Coordination Section" to keep CBC-IS propaganda in sync with the department's stringent demands for psy-war programming.<sup>25</sup> When Désy, a career diplomat who had

been a Canadian ambassador in Europe and Brazil, took the reigns he "ruthlessly 'purged' the service of all suspicion of leftist bias,"<sup>26</sup> said media scholar Olechowska.

A magazine published by the Canadian ministry of foreign affairs in 2000 praised Désy for having "set a standard unsurpassed for service to his country." The department's puff piece described Désy's command over the CBC-IS by saying:

The voice of Canada ... was then facing criticism for supposedly being "too pinko on communists." Changing the tone was among the tasks awaiting Désy.... He succeeded, making the [CBC Int'l] Service "frank and critical of the evils of communism to the point of combativeness."<sup>27</sup>

The ministry also kept its propaganda in line with Cold War narratives used by Canada's imperial masters, the US and UK. Discussing Canada's propaganda efforts in early 1953, Pearson said it was "important to coordinate these activities so that we all say the same thing ... that we follow the same principles." For this purpose, he said,

we keep in very close touch with the Voice of America and the BBC... so that we do not contradict each other and so what we do in this field dovetails into a general scheme of propaganda.<sup>28</sup>

As Pearson further explained, "Mr Désy has been in New York more than once discussing with the Voice of America the line they follow.... So there is very close coordination."<sup>29</sup> Canada's subservient collaboration with the world's imperialist powers on what Pearson called "psychological propaganda" for the "slaves behind the iron cur-

tain," was, he admitted, "a very tricky business ... in a time of cold war."<sup>30</sup>

Pearson used Désy and other Cold Warriors to make sure that CBC-IS broadcasts followed the approved narrative. "We have men in our divisions," said Minister Pearson, who "follow these broadcasts very carefully." A consummate propagandist, Pearson took a hands-on role in ensuring that Canada's propaganda did not stray from its prescribed track. "[E]very month or so I get a great stack of texts of broadcasts to countries behind the iron curtain," Pearson said, "and I try to see the line being followed and to satisfy myself it is the right line."<sup>31</sup>

## Just following orders, or leading the propaganda charge?

Thanks to Pearson's careful management, Canadian domestic and foreign policies remained fixated on the political line established by the leading Cold War forces in the US and UK. Pearson was a product of his times, serving the dictates of his era's political, military and economic powers.

But while Pearson clearly reflected the double standards, biases and fears of Western elites, he also rose to become a pioneering force of Cold War propaganda by using his abilities and connections to peddle that era's most extreme political obsessions. Pearson, then, should not be seen merely as a casualty of the Cold War's social psychoses. Although he was held captive by the extreme anticommunist rhetoric, beliefs and social orders of his time, this does not excuse his collaboration with the world's most violent Cold Warriors. As the Nuremberg trials made clear, following the orders of superiors—whether in military, political, economic or social spheres—is not a legitimate excuse for criminal behaviour.

Pearson did not just repeat the Cold War's hate-filled propaganda mantras like some victim of the Stockholm syndrome. He went far beyond following the social orders of the elite institutions to which he belonged; he rose to command those social orders.

As a pioneer of Cold War propaganda, Pearson used its most aggressive memes and tropes as psychological weapons in the West's "total war" against communism. This ideological war, which Pearson oversaw for Liberal PM Louis St. Laurent in the 1950s, was not limited to targeting the Soviet bogeyman for NATO. Pearson was also greatly skilled at crafting the political phobias of anti-Red propaganda for domestic use in Canada's McCarthyesque witchhunts. This was especially true of his attacks on peace activists. Considering his status as a revered, peace-movement cult hero, this is ironic.

## References and notes

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Pres. Dwight Eisenhower met with PM Louis St. Laurent, Cdn. ambassador Hume Wrong, Foreign Minister Lester Pearson and US Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles and discussed their antiRed war in Korea.

Vice President Richard Nixon said the talks "assist in tightening the bonds of co-operation between the two countries."



## Pearson was groomed for power by Mackenzie King, Louis St. Laurent, and their "Big [anti]Red Machine"

Lester Pearson's rise through the ranks of Canada's political bureaucracy was facilitated by leaders of the Liberal Party. As a civil servant with steadfast loyalty to the powers that be, his elders saw him as a budding star to be nurtured and groomed.

Initially, Pearson's most important mentor was Mackenzie King, Canada's longest-serving prime minister. Just before retiring in 1948, King anointed Pearson as external affairs minister. With this move, Pearson—a career diplomat who had served King's government in the imperial capitals of London and Washington during WWII—was promoted to cabinet without ever having to run for office.

After retiring, King was succeeded by Louis St. Laurent, who retained Pearson as foreign minister throughout his government (1948-57). Then, in 1958, when St. Laurent retired, he chose Pearson to replace him as Liberal leader. As political scientist Stephen Clarkson said in *The Big Red Machine* (2005), this was "a clear laying on of hands," when "the long-acknowledged dauphin ... was duly crowned by the party establishment and endorsed by the partisan faithful." With the patronage of St. Laurent and the Liberal establishment, Pearson won the party's leadership with about 80% of the convention's votes.

St. Laurent too had been selected by his political predecessor to rule the Liberals. When King retired in late 1948, St. Laurent was his clear choice for prime minister. St. Laurent, a corporate lawyer for some 35 years, was appointed to King's cabinet in 1941. Although he had never been elected to any level of government, he became King's justice minister and his powerful Quebec lieutenant. Then, in 1945, King made St. Laurent his external affairs minister. This in effect made him King's designate for prime minister. In 1949, after King retired, his political prodigy, St. Laurent, with the backing of the Liberal-Party machine, won about 75% of the seats in the federal election.

### Pearson and St. Laurent shared a love for Cold-War hatemongering

Besides entering politics as unelected cabinet ministers, and having served their Liberal government mentors as external affairs ministers, St. Laurent and King shared another key political pedigree. As staunch anticommunists they embraced a fearmongering hatred bent on destroying the USSR, and crushing Red sympathizers at home and abroad. This rabid Cold-War mentality was mandatory for receiving support from the US superpower to which Canada is still subordinated. Hand in glove with this worldview they gave blind support for US-led wars, coups and invasions. Both St. Laurent and Pearson had also played enthusiastic roles in creating the NATO military alliance which has had first-strike nuclear-weapons policies since its inception in 1949. With missionary zeal, these two devote religious men avidly promoted the idea of a "total-war" crusade against the USSR, despite its pivotal role in the Allies' military defeat of Nazi Germany.

### Building NATO to protect 'peace' for the "civilization of western Christendom"

St. Laurent's Cold War ravings were identical to those of his protégé, Pearson. For example, at the International Trade Fair in Toronto (June 11, 1948), St. Laurent built consent for what became the NATO military pact. In his speech as external affairs minister, St. Laurent described the Cold War with religious fervour:

[T]otalitarian communist aggression constitutes a direct and immediate threat to every democratic country, including Canada. It endangers our freedom and our peace. It puts in jeopardy the values and virtues of the civilization of western Christendom of which we are heirs and defenders...

This [anticommunist] force must not be only military; it must be economic; it must be moral. Just as in the last war, so also today, we are engaged in a 'struggle for the control of men's minds and men's souls.'