

Spies, Sex, and Scandal in Cold War Canada: Igor Gouzenko, Herbert Norman, and Gerda Munsinger

The end of the Second World War (1945)

Canadian Internationalism – creation of the United Nations

The Communists: From Despised, to Allies, to Enemies Again

The Honeymoon is over: West-East Tensions at the United Nations

Igor Gouzenko: The end of the Innocence

- b. Russia, 1919; wife Svetlana
- Soviet cipher clerk in Russian embassy
- Attracted to life in Canada; defects in September 1945

Initially, no one would listen?!

- but he reveals extensive spy network in Canada, US, and Britain

Royal Commission

- Look into espionage in Canada
- Gouzenko a key witness
- Leads to arrests: civil servants, scientists, military, even MP

Gouzenko as Author: *This Was My Choice* (1948); *The Fall of a Titan* (1954) – wins Governor General's Award

The "Man in the Paper Bag"

Legacies:

- Canada shocked out of its complacency regarding the Soviets
- Soviet spy network obvious
- Exposed serious issues in security policies and procedures

Cold War: Communism again a dirty word; "Iron Curtain" (1946-)

Canada's position determined by:

- Russian spying – Gouzenko evidence
- The totalitarian Soviet regime - detested
- Strong links to the US and Britain

Mackenzie King – the old man

- 1946 – appoints Louis St. Laurent as Secretary of State for External Affairs
- Remains nervous about internationalism until he retires in 1949

Internationalism - no longer isolationism of interwar years

The Korean War

Nuclear Threat – widespread fears

McCarthyism: "Witch hunts" for Communists in the U.S.

Herbert Norman

- b.1909 in Japan; missionary parents
- Education: Universities of Toronto, Cambridge, Harvard, and Columbia

Political Beliefs: eventually lead to communism

- Joins communist study groups at Cambridge, Harvard, Columbia
- But later denies this!

Joins Dept of External Affairs (1940)

- Special Intelligence Section - Japan
- Lies to the FBI
- Works with Supreme Allied Commander in Japan at end of war
- Name "Norman" pops up in cipher from Moscow - Herbert Norman a communist????

Security Check (1950) - Questioned about his past; Denies any communist ties; "possibly naïve, or worse, a fool"!

Questioned Again (1951) - Denies any formal affiliation with the communist party ... ever; denies any wrongdoing or disloyalty; **Agent of influence?**

Norman posted to Egypt (1956) – Suez Crisis - Pearson wins Nobel Peace Prize, but Norman's Role Significant

- instrumental in dealing with the Egyptian president Nasser, and in earning his confidence
- persuaded Nasser to allow the UNEF to enter into Egypt, and for Cdn troops to be a part

More U.S. Allegations - "Norman case" hits newspapers and House of Commons yet again

- April 4, 1957 – Herbert Norman had enough!

Reaction to Norman's Suicide: "murdered by slander"; **"a victim of witch-hunting proclivities"**

- Anti-Americanism

Conclusions – still uncertain

- Was he a spy? – no hard evidence
- Was he an agent of influence? – likely not
- Was he a communist in the 1930s? – yes
- Did he remain a communist after that? – no hard evidence
- A victim of U.S. witch-hunting? – clearly!

John Diefenbaker wins – PM 1957-1963

Cold War tensions: the Avro Arrow; Nuclear missiles; Cuban Missile Crisis

1963 Election – Liberal victory - two MINORITY Liberal govts in (1963, 1965)

The Nadir of Politics?

- Spencer Case: Victor Spencer – Vancouver postal clerk spying for the Russians
- RCMP Uncover "Sordid Affair" involving Pierre Seigny (War veteran; Former Conservative Associate Minister of National Defence; Dief knew, but did not fire him)
- Pearson and Diefenbaker - blackmail

March 1966 – Liberals raise the "Monseigneur case" in House of Commons: Refers to GERDA MUNSINGER (Prostitute? German spy? Lover of Conservative Cabinet ministers!)

Munsinger found in Munich: "I suppose you want to ask about Seigny..."

- She was having affair with Seigny
- Served as Russian spy in Germany in late 1940s?
- To Montreal (1955-61) -- Prostitute or "party girl"?

Embarrassing saga; no Winners in the end!