

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 "harranguing." 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.