

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 dispatches 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