



## **"A BRIGHT SHINING MECCA": BRITISH CULTURE AND POLITICAL WARFARE IN THE COLD WAR AND BEYOND**

*The world balance of power at the present time depends as much on the ideas in men's minds—in the mind of the Italian civil servant, the Vietnamese peasant, or the London docker—as on the weapons in the hands, or even the money in the pockets. 1*

It has not exactly been front-page news but, in the last five or 30 years, scholars have been rewriting the history of American foreign policy in the early cold war. The conflict was a diplomatic, economic, and military struggle with the Soviet Union, but it was more than this. As NSC 68, the US blueprint for a global campaign to vanquish Soviet Communism, stated in September 1950:

Unwillingly our free society finds itself mortally challenged by the Soviet system. No other value system is so wholly irreconcilable with ours, so implacable in its purpose to destroy ours, so capable of turning to its own uses the most dangerous and divisive trends in our own society, no other so skillfully and powerfully evokes the elements of irrationality in human nature everywhere . . . 2

This emphasis on the ideological and cultural dimension of "America" has taken history beyond presidents, statesmen, and generals. The United States campaign for freedom relied on a nexus of government and private action. George Kennan, who was not only promoting containment but looking at liberation of peoples behind the Iron Curtain, published "The Inauguration of Organized Political Warfare" in May 1948. The concept of a voluntary movement was central to the strategy: "Throughout our history, private American citizens have banded together to champion the cause of freedom for people suffering under oppression. . . . Our proposal is that this tradition be revived specifically to further American national interests in the present crisis." 3

Having castigated the ideals of Soviet Communism—as previously with National Socialism and Italian Fascism—as little more than the manipulated propaganda of a state-controlled system, Washington had to ensure that its ideological crusade was led by individuals freely speaking of their country's superiority. The network was not controlled by the government—it was established and developed more through negotiation—but there was an element of illusion about the "autonomy" of American freedom. While there was overt

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government support for some aspects of the crusade, much of it was supported through covert funding and guidance. 4

Yet recent scholarship, even as it offers a comprehensive portrayal of American culture and foreign policy in the cold war, runs the risk of a different limitation. The global conflict is reified as a bipolar contest between blocs led by the United States and the Soviet Union. Washington's closest ally, Britain, if mentioned at all, is reduced to a passive follower of an American lead.

British, rather than American initiatives, helped define the crusade for freedom. Indeed, it was the British who developed the notion of "political warfare" in World War II, and it would be the British who would consider the need for a peacetime version as the Grand Alliance with Moscow fell apart. Before Kennan's memorandum proposing an organized campaign, before initiatives such as the Marshall Plan and the rhetoric of the Truman Doctrine, the British were considering a global propaganda effort. Within a year of V-E Day, top Foreign Office advisors were arguing, "We have no choice but immediately to defend ourselves in every possible way and everywhere . . . directing our campaign against Communism as such (which we should frankly expose as totalitarianism) rather than against the policy of the Soviet Government." 5 The Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin, stepped in with an important modification: "I am quite sure that the putting over of positive results of British attitudes would be a better corrective." 6

A study of Britain's mobilization on the cultural front gives depth to the concept of an Anglo-American alliance waging a total battle against a Soviet foe. However, it also takes us beyond simple extensions of the so-called special relationship. The objective of the British strategy went well beyond supporting United States foreign policy in the cold war. Bevin appealed to his colleagues, "We should seek to make London the Mecca for Social Democrats in Europe." 7 The campaign soon became far more than a positive projection against Communism, directing itself to nationalist movements which posed a different kind of challenge to London's global influence. And, as America's own crusades also looked beyond Europe to different parts of the "developing world," Washington and London could find themselves not only on parallel but divergent paths.

IN THE SPRING OF 1949, GEORGE ORWELL lay in a Gloucestershire sanatorium, seriously ill with tuberculosis. He would be dead within nine months, but lifted by an experimental course of streptomycin, he was receiving visits from old friends. One of these visitors was Celia Kirwan, the sister-in-law of Arthur Koestler and a figure in her own right on the London literary scene, having served as Cyril Connolly's assistant on Horizon. After the death of his first wife, Orwell, who had struck up a friendship with Koestler during the war

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and stayed with him during the winter of 1945–46, was infatuated with Kirwan and proposed marriage to her. She politely declined, but the two stayed in touch.

Kirwan had a motive beyond concern for Orwell's health. She was one of the first employees of the top-secret Information Research Department, established in January 1948 to co-ordinate and disseminate pro-British and anti-Communist propaganda. She told Orwell of proposed IRD initiatives and reported to her superiors that "he was glad to learn of them and expressed his wholehearted approval of IRD aims." Orwell said he was too ill to participate himself but he suggested others who might. As she departed, Kirwan left "some material" and promised to send him "photostats of some of his articles on the theme of Soviet repression of the arts, in the hope that he may become inspired when he is better to take them up again."

Orwell's inspiration took a more immediate turn. Since 1945, he had kept a notebook listing 135 "crypto-Communists" including Labour MPs, the future Poet Laureate Cecil Day-Lewis, Orson Welles, Paul Robeson, John Steinbeck, Michael Redgrave, Stephen Spender, J. B. Priestley, Charlie Chaplin, the political economist Harold Laski, and the historians Isaac Deutscher and A. J. P. Taylor. After some thought—"the whole difficulty is to decide where each person stands, & one has to treat each case individually"—Orwell passed 38 names to Kirwan and the IRD. 8

Orwell is as much an icon as a political writer for the English. The incident of "The List" has thus provoked much agonized comment on whether the author who warned of Big Brother wound up cooperating with him. Such deliberations are simplistic. Orwell's communication with Kirwan was far more than a blacklist. His intervention pointed not only to the depth of the covert government-private network behind Britain's cultural campaign but also the motivation for that network: the belief that there was a moral imperative for anti-Communism and for the projection of an "English way" around the world. Ernest Bevin told Cabinet colleagues, "[We should seek] to oppose the inroads of Communism, by taking the offensive against it, basing ourselves on the standpoint of the position and vital ideas of British Social Democracy and Western civilisation, and to give a lead to our friends abroad and help them in the anti-Communist struggle." 9

The campaign took in all spheres of activity. Ian Jacob, the BBC's director of external programming, had set the Corporation's autonomy aside in 1946 when he agreed that "the BBC [would] temper its broadcasts to accord with the national interest." 10 Jacob joined the Foreign Office's Russia Committee (the Committee changing its meetings from Tuesdays to Thursday to fit Jacob's schedule) and soon won the praise of the Permanent Undersecretary, Orme Sargent, "The BBC are over the whole foreign field extremely helpful and cooperative." 11 Denis Healey, who had been a Communist Party member as a



student but had returned from the war to become Secretary of the Labour Party, served as a liaison both to “private” outlets who could disseminate Government material and to foreign activists, such as Eastern European writers, who could provide that material. 12 The Trade Unions Congress published a newsletter which was covertly financed by government agencies. Academics such as the Soviet specialist Leonard Schapiro published books and articles, sometimes with publishers such as Bodley Head or Allen and Unwin, sometimes with the British intelligence services’ “private” publisher Ampersand, based on “information” passed to them by Government contacts.13

The key Cabinet meeting to organize this government-private network took place on January 8, 1948. Bevin prepared a memorandum for ministerial colleagues which set out the need for “a small section in the Foreign Office,” linked to British intelligence agencies, to promote the British case overseas. With the proviso that “it was important that in the execution of the policy that too much emphasis should not be laid on its anti-Soviet aspect,” the Cabinet established the IRD, to be funded secretly in the same manner as the security and intelligence services. 14

The significance of the IRD’s formation can only be seen, however, in the full context of the Cabinet meeting. Ministers were considering not one but five memoranda, including “Review of Soviet Policy,” “Policy in Germany,” and “The First Aim of British Foreign Policy.” Almost a year before the newly-formed National Security Council was setting out a United States global policy to confront the Soviet Union, Britain was stealing a march.

The British vision, in contrast to that of Washington, was of a campaign which moved far beyond anti-Soviet or anti-Communist activity and propaganda. Indeed, Britain was trying to establish a global role distinct from Washington as well as Moscow. Five days before the Cabinet meeting, Prime Minister Clement Attlee described the “Third Force” for a national radio audience:

At one end of the scale are the Communist countries; at the other end the United States of America stands for individual liberty in the political sphere and for the maintenance of human rights, but its economy is based on capitalism, with all the problems which it presents and with the characteristic extreme inequality of wealth in its citizens . . . .

Great Britain, like the other countries of Western Europe, is placed, geographically and from the point of view of economic and political theory between these two great continental states . . . . Our task is to work out a system of a new and challenging kind, which combines individual freedom with a planned economy, democracy, with social justice. 15



This dimension of the British campaign was withheld from American colleagues: a British Embassy official reported: "We were, of course, very careful to exclude any controversial points and in particular the need to contrast our own principles not only with those of communism, but also with the 'inefficiency, social injustice and moral weakness of unrestrained capitalism.'" 16

The far-reaching extent of the Labour Government's objectives was soon obscured by prosaic limitations. Financial restrictions and, following from this, military constraints meant that Bevin's search for an American commitment to Continental defense risked becoming a substitute for British policy rather than a complement to it. Risk became reality soon after the formation of NATO when Britain, having exhausted the loan provided by the United States after World War II and beset by a continuing drain on foreign reserves, had no alternative but to devalue the pound and to acquiesce in US conditions for "convertibility" of sterling and the break-up of a British trading zone. The Permanent Under-Secretary's Committee, the key inter-departmental panel advising ministers, concluded in May 1949, "The Commonwealth alone cannot form a Third World Power equivalent to the United States or the Soviet Union . . . . A weak, neutral Western Europe is undesirable and a strong, independent Western Europe is impracticable." 17

British ambitions had been checked. Indeed, the collapse of the "Third Force" concept occurred so quickly that some participants rewrote history to claim it never existed. Christopher Mayhew, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office, insisted that the positive dimension was emphasized merely to win the approval of Labour MPs who were sceptical of alliance with the United States: "We only dealt with the Third Force idea frankly, or at least I did, because . . . I didn't want Bevin to be defeated and humiliated inside the Labour Party." 18 Some advisors had foreseen conditions upon the Third Force before it was presented for Cabinet approval, the Foreign Office's Christopher Warner noting: "This idea was somewhat misleading since Western Europe could only be built on the Marshall Aid Plan and must be dependent upon American military backing against the Soviet threat." Ministers such as Bevin and Attlee, however, seized upon the response of another official, Gladwyn Jebb, that the Third Force was "put . . . forward as an objective which might eventually be achieved." 19

More importantly, British political warfare and the cultural efforts supporting it were linked with London's interests outside Europe. The first campaign after World War II was directed at the threat to Britain's position in the Middle East. In March 1948, after the coup in Czechoslovakia consolidated Communist control, the Cabinet was still considering "the weapon of propaganda [to] be used to the full" against "The Threat to Western Civilisation"



posed by Soviet policy in Europe. 20 Bevin had already established that British policy was seeking union with “not only the countries of Western Europe but also their Colonial possessions in Africa and the East . . . [to] form a bloc which, both in population and productive capacity, could stand on an equality with the Western hemisphere and Soviet blocs.” 21 A special Cabinet committee established for “anti-Communist propaganda” confirmed that “all our propaganda should give a high priority to the British Commonwealth.” 22

Bevin’s vision was re-confirmed in July 1949 by the Permanent Under-Secretary’s Committee, which established that “this [Russian] expansionist tendency is liable to conflict with British and Western interests, not only by working towards a Russian domination of continental Europe but also by challenging Britain’s strategic and economic position in the Middle East and the Far East.” 23 The IRD, which had quickly grown from its initial complement of eight officers to take in more than 300 “contract” agents who produced and disseminated material, moved beyond the challenge of the Soviet bloc to confront nationalist oppositions from Malaya to Burma to Kenya to Egypt. 24

The strategy did not preclude co-operation with US agencies and the American concept of “political warfare.” On the contrary, the emphasis on “anti-Communism” in conversations in Washington were valuable for British campaigns against nationalist insurgencies. After the Americans rapidly expanded their government-private network and covert operations under the mandate of NSC 68, the blueprint for a comprehensive global campaign to vanquish the Soviet bloc, high-level Foreign Office representatives visited Washington to agree on “close consultation and cooperation on common objectives” and the British Embassy appointed a liaison officer for psychological operations. 25 The following year, Frank Wisner, the United States intelligence officer masterminding the creation of the “Mighty Wurlitzer” to play overseas propaganda, came to London to discuss the British contribution. 26

While British “information” services tried to sustain a global position, Anglo-American efforts focused on the battle for European hearts and minds. The United States covertly provided funds and guidance for “private” groups promoting European federalism, such as the American Committee for a United Europe. The leading intellectual movement, the Congress for Cultural Freedom, was based in Europe but it was underpinned by money from the CIA and, to a much lesser extent, MI6, and supervised by the Estonian-born CIA officer Michael Josselson. This combination of political, intellectual, and cultural contacts eventually led to the most famous (and misunderstood) United States-European “network,” the Bilderberg group, which first met in Oosterbeek, Holland, in 1954.

The cultural spearhead for this political warfare was the journal Encounter. First proposed in the 1951 meetings between Frank Wisner and his

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British counterparts, the initiative was developed in meetings between Nicolas Nabokov, François Bondy, Malcolm Muggeridge, Tosco Fyvel, and Fredric Warburg, as well as Michael Josselson. They agreed that London would be the center of the venture. The American editor was Irving Kristol, the former assistant editor of Commentary and one of the forefathers of anti-Communist “neo-conservatism.” The British editor was Stephen Spender. Kristol oversaw the “political” dimension of the journal, while Spender was the channel for most of the literary contributions.

Spender was never cognizant, until newspaper revelations in 1966, of the role of United States and British intelligence services in the formation and development of Encounter. Kristol has always maintained that he was also “unwitting” about the State’s involvement; he was equally insistent that he was an “independent” editor. The former assertion appears to be true, despite widespread party chatter about the source of Encounter’s budget; the latter is far more debatable. Kristol did clash with Josselson about the content of the journal, particularly the balance between a “cultural” and “political” approach, but the eventual output was usually acceptable to both editor and sponsor. As Kristol framed the crusade that linked him and the CIA, “The elite was us—the ‘happy few’ who had been chosen by History to guide our fellow creatures toward a secular redemption.” (note)

One of the most controversial essays in Encounter was “A Postscript to the Rosenberg Case” by Leslie Fiedler, which appeared in the debut number of the journal. Fiedler’s attempt to blame the Rosenbergs’ plight upon the Communists, rather than the United States Government that sentenced them to death, and his characterization of the couple as “dehumanized” disturbed even supporters of Encounter, including Stephen Spender, not to mention subversive European left-wingers. E. M. Forster expressed his resentment of “the contempt and severity with which [the essay] treats Ethel Rosenberg’s last days . . . . I wonder how [Fiedler] will act if he is ever condemned to death.”<sup>27</sup> Yet it was another contribution by Fiedler in 1954 that may offer more insight into the tensions within the Anglo-American political culture of the cold war. Whereas “A Postscript” was a defensive response to European criticisms, “The Good American” took issue against an alleged European anti-Americanism:

The self-distrust of the [European] intellectuals, their loss of faith in their function and in the value of their survival, blends with the Marxist dogma that one’s own bourgeoisie (if you are a bourgeois, yourself!) is the worst enemy. Conditioned by this principled self-hatred, the European intellectual finds it hard to forgive America for being willing and able to let him live; and even harder to forgive himself for knowing that he could be, in our “McCarthy-

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ridden" land, if not happy at least unhappy in his customary way. Both these resentments he takes out on a mythicised image of all he hates, which he calls America. 28

"The Good American" displayed the double edge of the government-private campaign. On the one hand, it set out the necessity for "Europe" to overcome any cultural fears about "America" in the cause of an ideological battle against Communism. On the other hand, Fiedler ran the risk that, by chastizing self-hating Europeans, he would alienate them rather than bring them into the fold of the "Free World."

Far from agreeing with such a view of the Good American and the Self-Hating European, British contributors to Encounter—not only "intellectuals" but also politicians and officials—tried to negotiate a middle position in this polemical cold war. They used the pages of the journal to consider how European socialism and economic and social policies differed from those of the United States. They reflected on the military and political dynamics of "alliance." Leading Labour politicians such as Hugh Gaitskell, Anthony Crosland, and Richard Crossman contributed to the journal, but they were always careful to uphold their autonomy. As Gaitskell warned at the time of Encounter's inception, it was "quite clear . . . that any politics we published would be suspect through people knowing we had American support." 29

Such negotiations continued in the spirit of British government directives that, in a cold war which was "a struggle for men's minds . . . a struggle to determine whether the mass of mankind shall look for hope towards the Soviet Union or towards the Western democracies, . . . the United Kingdom [was] by its peculiar combination of cultural prestige and material power best fitted . . . [to be] the highest exemplar of Western civilization." 30 Yet, if London's ideological and cultural campaign developed in the context of British objectives, that campaign would not have been possible without the "global" context of America's political warfare and its development of government-private networks.

That tension was compounded by a gap in resources. British intelligence services and their private allies never had the budgets or access to funds of their American cousins, and never had the scope of operations supported by the CIA's International Organizations Division. When Frank Wisner lectured British colleagues in 1951, "It is essential to secure the cooperation of people with conspicuous access to wealth in their own right," a Foreign Office representative could only quip, "People with conspicuous access to wealth in their own right = rich people." 31 As early as 1953, the British "organisation" behind Encounter, the British Society for Cultural Freedom, had become little more than a front for money channeled through the accounts of Lord Victor Rothschild.

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After 1967, when the covert dimension of the government-private network was exposed, the British were left far behind. Far from shutting down the covert network, the United States Government sought other hiding places. Richard Bissell, the former Deputy Director of the CIA and a key official in the formation of the network, told the Council on Foreign Relations in 1968: "If the agency is to be effective, it will have to make use of private institutions on an expanding scale, though those relations which have been 'blown' cannot be resurrected. We need to operate under deeper cover, with increased attention to the use of 'cut-outs.'" (note)

Some elements of the network were brought into the open, as with the public establishment of Radios Free Europe and Free Asia in 1971. Others, such as the CIA's extensive links with journalists, remained cloaked. Later organizations such as the National Endowment for Democracy, funded by the government but ostensibly "autonomous," would be established after the Reagan administration's initiatives such as "Project Democracy" and Reagan's declared confrontation with the Soviet "evil empire." When the Berlin Wall came down in 1989 and Soviet Communism followed two years later, the National Endowment for Democracy quickly claimed a major role in victory; unlike the United States Information Agency, which struggled for a post-cold war role and was eventually abolished in 1999, the National Endowment for Democracy flourished with campaigns that moved far beyond the former Soviet bloc.

Meanwhile the British campaign had dwindled away. In part, political warfare followed the contraction of Britain's overseas position; in part, the campaigns of the Information Research Department like other government ventures would be vulnerable to the large-scale budget cuts forced by Britain's economic crises of the 1970s; in part, the evolution of the new Europe of the European Economic Community and Ostpolitik raised the prospect of cold war obsolescence for British efforts. There were some ripples from controversial projects such as the Institute for the Study of Conflict but the abolition of the IRD in 1977, after the British mainstream press finally blew the Department's cover, was simply the last stage in a long process.

The demise of Britain's agency for political warfare confirmed that London had moved beyond any formal Anglo-American structure. Beyond that, however, one may question whether it ever projected a suitable notion of "America" on Washington's behalf. The British-based dimension of the government-private network was never a conduit for an agreed perspective. The case of "American Studies" in Britain is seminal.

In the 1950s the United States network sought the development of American Studies programs at British universities and helped create the British Association for American Studies. Leading British academics and promising postgraduates who specialized in American history and literature were

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supported through conferences, overseas tours, research grants, book purchases, and cataloging of sources. Those academics and postgraduates generally promoted the vision of “America” as “a mutual understanding between our two democracies who will carry the common burdens of the future.”<sup>32</sup> It has been established, however, that this process was far more complex than control or even co-optation of British academics by the US government. The negotiation of support was triangular, with the Rockefeller Foundation playing an essential role not only in serving as the ultimate source of funding but in establishing the scope of “American Studies.” There were differences of interest and emphasis—bureaucratic, political, economic, and intellectual—between the three actors.<sup>33</sup> Frank Thistlethwaite, the first Chairman of British Association for American Studies, may have admitted, “It would be a considerable responsibility to turn down the means of getting ourselves so comfortably established,” but he and his colleagues also sought “autonomy” from both the United States government and the Rockefeller Foundation in their use of grants.<sup>34</sup>

By the 1960s that autonomy had led to a very different “American Studies.” The United States Government now faced the Civil Rights Movement and the Vietnam War, and the role of the foundations had changed with end of the large-scale Rockefeller grants. British academics portrayed an “America” which was not necessarily one of progress and consensus but of conflict at home and dubious achievement abroad. And, by the 1990s and the end of the cold war, the foundations of the 1950s arrangement were in danger. The locus of United States support for cultural and intellectual initiatives had moved from Western Europe to other parts of the world, but tensions went far beyond shifts in funding. A controversial after-dinner speech in 1995 by the United States Ambassador to Britain, William Crowe, at the BAAS Annual Conference led to a rift between the US Embassy and the Association, including a cessation of Embassy funding to future conferences and to debates over the future of institutions such as the University of London’s Institute of US Studies.<sup>35</sup> Some programs began to interrogate the notion of a “constructive anti-Americanism” to the point where at least one was labeled by United States-based critics as a seat of “anti-American Studies.”<sup>36</sup>

IN THE POST-SEPTEMBER 11 WORLD, THERE WAS A RENEWED Anglo-American effort at political warfare. The London Guardian reported in October 2001 on meetings in Washington for a global communications network “coordinating and magnifying the vital propaganda campaign which the US and Britain are leading against the global terrorist coalition.”<sup>37</sup> That effort would soon turn its attention toward Iraq. In March 2002, as Lynne Cheney, the former head of the National Endowment of Humanities, opened a State Department exhibition in London of 28 photographs of the demolished World Trade Center, her husband, Vice-President Dick Cheney, was proposing “regime change” in Baghdad to Prime



Minister Tony Blair. 38 The British Government's contribution to the public diplomacy effort would include the September 2002 dossier of Saddam Hussein's supposed stockpile of weapons of mass destruction, including the claim that chemical and biological weapons could be deployed within 45 minutes. 39

The reality of British government-private network in support of this political warfare was complex. Certainly "private" voices were raised and pens were wielded in support of American-led operations against the enemy in Afghanistan and then in Iraq. Those assertions took place, however, in the midst of a protracted, heated debate over the wisdom of those operation. 40

Britain was not entirely an unquestioning ally in the War on Terror. President Bush himself seemed to recognize this in his plea, a week after United States bombs began falling on Afghanistan: "I'm amazed that there is such misunderstanding of what our country is about that people would hate us. I, like most Americans, I just can't believe it, because I know how good we are." 41

Reductionist critiques such as Robert Kagan's "Americans are from Mars, Europeans are from Venus," were a caricature. The United States in fact possessed military hardware and economic resources that Europe did not possess or wish to use. 42

Throughout the cold war, the ideological and cultural contest was often framed as "us" versus "them" with no room for a middle position such as "neutralism." The expression of that dichotomy has been even more dramatic in recent years, with President Bush's "you are either with us or you are with the terrorists." In this formulation, as well as Kagan's, Venusians who did not make a choice were weak or worse.

The British Government designed the post-war cultural campaign as a search for a middle position for a European Mecca. The failure to realize that vision was due not to a shift in ideology but to a grudging recognition of military and economic limitations.

More than 50 years later that issue is still at the heart of British political culture. While Prime Minister Blair and his supporters continued to invoke the "special relationship," others inside and outside the Government have queried the assumption of a fundamental Anglo-American alliance. Kagan's "Europe" is a crude sketch but it does point to an essential development: with the evolution of political, legal, and military structures as well as the formation of the European Union with a single currency, there is an alternate space for negotiation and implementation of foreign policy. Robin Cook, the former Foreign Secretary who resigned from the Blair Cabinet on the eve of the current war in Iraq, has argued, "The single most strategic and most historically most remarkable achievement of the Blair administration was to put Britain back at the heart of Europe. We've got to do that all over again, is the short answer." 43 Public intellectuals such as Timothy Garton Ash and Jonathan Freedland have

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outlined this new European framework and strategy; others such as George Monbiot have gone further in calling for a new global approach to intervention, economics, and “democracy.” 44

American invocations of public diplomacy and Presidential agonizing over “why don’t they like us?” will do little to alter this new environment. The cold war, fought as a total conflict, may have fostered institutional links and even structural changes underpinning a British political culture allied with the United States against Soviet Communism. Some of those joint undertakings may have been maintained, for example, under the umbrella of NATO, or renewed in later campaigns such as the interventions in the Balkans and the Middle East. However, the framework of the “special relationship” has never been comprehensive – to put the argument in crude cold war language, it could not contain British political interests which diverged from those of the United States as early as the 1950s. It could not contain economic, cultural, and even ideological shifts that challenged an assumed Anglo-American unity. It could not do so then, and despite the catch-all twenty-first century framework of the “War on Terror,” it cannot do so now.

*Scott Lucas*

- 1 Christopher Mayhew, "British Foreign Policy since 1945", International Affairs, 1950, p. 477. need volume #
- 2 State Department-Department of Defense report (NSC 68), Apr. 7, 1950, US Declassified Document Reference System, Retrospective 71D.
- 3 Policy Planning Staff report, "The Inauguration of Organized Political Warfare," May 4, 1948, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1945-1950: Emergence of the Intelligence Establishment, Document 269, [http://www.state.gov/www/about\\_state/history/intel/260\\_269.html](http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/intel/260_269.html).
- 4 See, for example, the essays in Helen Laville, ed., Cultural Cold Wars (London, 2005). Nor is this research and analysis confined to the realm of history. It is also relevant to comprehension of the full extent of America's current wars. A memorandum by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, leaked to the press in October 2003, exposed the current State-private network. After posing the general questions, "Are we winning or losing the Global War on Terror? Is the USG changing fast enough?" Rumsfeld set out specific ideas such as "Should we create a private foundation to entice radical madrassas to a more moderate course?" (MSNBC, "Rumsfeld's Memo on Iraq, Afghanistan," Dec. 5, 2003, [msnbc.msn.com/id/3225926/](http://msnbc.msn.com/id/3225926/)).
- 5 Kirkpatrick memorandum, May 22, 1946, PRO, FO 930/488/P449/1/907.
- 6 Bevin note, undated, PRO, FO 930/488/P449/1/907.
- 7 "Future Foreign Publicity Policy," Jan. 8, 1948, PRO, CAB129/23, C.P.(48)8.
- 8 See Scott Lucas, Orwell (London, 2003), pp. 105-112.
- 9 "Future Foreign Publicity Policy", Jan. 8, 1948, PRO, CAB129/23, C.P.(48)8.
- 10 Mackenzie note, Dec. 7, 1946, PRO, FO 371/71632A/N11368/G.
- 11 Russia Committee minutes, Sep. 24, 1946, PRO, FO371/56886/N12615; Nigel Williamson, "BBC was Party to Anti-Soviet Publicity Campaign," The Times, Aug. 18, 1995, p. 8; Sargent to Peterson, July 28, 1947, PRO, FO371/66370/N8114/271/38. See also Michael Tracey, A Variety of Lives: A Biography of Sir Hugh Greene (London, 1983), pp. 119-122.
- 12 Nicholas Bethell, "Healey Served as Covert Linchpin in War of Words," The Times, Aug. 18, 1995, p. 8; Richard Norton-Taylor, "Labour's Role in Secret Anti-Communist Plan Revealed," Guardian, Aug. 18, 1995, p. 3.
- 13 Scott Lucas, "The British Ministry of Propaganda", Independent on Sunday, Feb. 26, 1995, p. 20
- 14 Offering contrasts and irony, two of the first eight officials of the IRD were Robert Conquest, later prominent as a historian of the Soviet Union, and Guy



Burgess, one of the five Cambridge "Ring of Spies" providing information to Moscow.

15 Attlee radio broadcast, reported in The Times, Jan. 5, 1948, p. 4

16 Quoted in Richard Norton-Taylor, "Labour's Role in Secret Anti-Communist Plan Revealed," Aug. 18, 1995, p. 3

17 Permanent Undersecretary Committee report, PUSC(22) Final, May 5, 1949, PRO, FO 371/76384/W3114/3/500G.

18 Quoted in Paul Lashmar and James Oliver, Britain's Secret Propaganda War 1948-1977 (Stroud, UK, 1998), p. 27.

19 Russia Committee minutes, Dec. 18, 1947, PRO, FO371/66375/N14892/271/38G.

20 Bevin memorandum, "The Threat to Western Civilisation," Mar. 3, 1948, PRO, CAB129/25, CP(48)72. The first major IRD campaign culminated in an assault at the United Nations upon a Soviet "slave system" with "no parallel in history". ("Slave System in Russia Attacked by Britain," Daily Telegraph & Morning Post, Oct. 16, 1948, p. 4; "Soviet 'Slave System': Mr Mayhew's Attack," The Times, Oct. 16, 1948, PAGE?

21 Cabinet minutes, Jan. 8, 1948, PRO, CAB128/12.

22 Cabinet committee (GEN 231) Minutes, July 22, 1948, PRO, CAB130/37.

23 Permanent Undersecretary Committee report, PUSC 31, July 27, 1949, PRO, FO 371/77622/N11007.

24 See Susan Carruthers, Winning Hearts and Minds: British Governments, the Media and Colonial Counter-Insurgency, 1944-1960 (Leicester, UK, 1995).

25 Circular to Diplomatic Missions, undated [1950], US National Archives, Diplomatic Branch, Lot Files, Lot 53 D 47, Box 12, Regaining the Psychological Initiative Adam Watson, the liaison officer in 1950, was the first Deputy Head of IRD.

26 In an irony echoing Guy Burgess's service for IRD, Wisner was accompanied by Kim Philby, the chief MI6 officer in Washington, who was the most important Soviet agent within Whitehall. [Frances Stonor Saunders, Who Paid the Piper?: The CIA and the Cultural Cold War (London, 1999), p. 167].

27 Quoted in Barbara Sussex, Encounter: Forming a Euro-American Cultural Bloc? (M.Phil. thesis, University of Birmingham, 2002), p. 43.

28 Leslie Fiedler, "The Good American," Encounter 2/3 (March 1954), p. 54.

29 Quoted in Sussex, Encounter, p. 44.

30 Quoted in Wesley Wark, "Coming In from the Cold: British Propaganda and Red Army Defectors, 1945-1952," International History Review (1987), PAGE?

31 Quoted in Saunders, p. 167.

32 Quoted in David Reynolds, "Whitehall, Washington, and the Promotion of American Studies in Britain during World War Two," Journal of American Studies (1982), p. 187.

33 See Ali Fisher, "Double Vision, Double Analysis: The Role of Interpretation, Negotiation, and Compromise in the State-Private Network and British American Studies" in Laville, ed., Cultural Cold Wars (London, 2005); Ali Fisher and Scott Lucas, "Master and Servant? The US Government and the Founding of the British Association for American Studies," European Journal of American Culture (2002), pp. 16-25.

34 Quoted in Fisher and Lucas, "Master and Servant?" p. 16.

35 The author was in the audience addressed by Crowe. The fallout from the speech and the audience reaction was described to the author by several knowledgeable sources.

36 W. Scott Lucas, "Revealing the Parameters of Opinion: An Interview with Frances Stonor Saunders" in G. Scott-Smith and H. Krabbendam, The Cultural Cold War in Western Europe, 1945-1960 (London, 2003), pp. 15-40; John Earl Haynes and Harvey Klehr, In Denial: Historians, Communism, and Espionage (San Francisco, 2003), p. 48.

37 Michael White, "Campbell Takes a Spin to White House," Guardian, Oct. 29, 2001, reprinted at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/guardianpolitics/story/0,,582604,00.html>.

38 See Liam Kennedy, "Remembering September 11: Photography as Cultural Diplomacy," International Affairs (March 2003), pp. 315-26; Julian Borger et al., "Inaction is Not an Option," Guardian, Mar. 12, 2002, reprinted at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/international/story/0,,665975,00.html>.

39 See Richard Norton-Taylor and Michael White, "Blair Misused Intelligence, Says Ex-Spy Officer," Guardian, Oct. 29, 2004, reprinted at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/guardianpolitics/story/0,,1338649,00.html>.

40 Two days after Sep. 11, 2001, the United States Ambassador to Britain, Philip Lader, was a member of the panel on the BBC's flagship political discussion programme, Question Time. Lader was greeted by hostile questioning from the audience, including the assertion that aspects of US foreign policy had provided the attacks. The incident was quickly represented by many outlets as the height of an insensitive, irrational hatred of the US, "disgusting . . . a terrible insult not only to America but also hundreds of British families who have lost relatives." For William Shawcross, "There is just one racism that is tolerated—anti-Americanism. Not just tolerated, but often applauded." [Jason Deans, "Question Time Accused of Anti-US Bias." Guardian, Sep. 14, 2001, reprinted at <http://media.guardian.co.uk/attack/story/0,,551844,00.html>]; William Shawcross, "Stop This Racism," Guardian, Sep. 17, 2001, reprinted at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/comment/story/0,,552907,00.html>.] It could be interpreted, however, as a far from irrational criticism of American foreign policy. As a former British minister wrote, "A mature debate will depend on our ability to separate issues of cause and effect from questions of moral



responsibility." [David Clark, "To Explain is Not to Excuse," Guardian, Sep. 21, 2001, reprinted at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/comment/story/0,,555429,00.html>.] For further description and discussion, see Scott Lucas, The Betrayal of Dissent: Beyond Orwell, Hitchens, and the New American Century (London, 2004), pp. 87-115.

41 Quoted in CNN, Late Edition with Wolf Blitzer, Oct. 14, 2001, reprinted at <http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/011014/le.00.html>

42 See Robert Kagan, Of Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order (New York, 2003).

43 Robin Cook, "We Should Have Said, Sorry, We Cannot Go with You Now," Observer, Mar. 23, 2003, reprinted at <http://observer.guardian.co.uk/politics/story/0,,920355,00.html>.

44 See Timothy Garton Ash, Free World: America, Europe, and the Surprising Future of the West (London, 2004); Jonathan Freedland, "What Would You Suggest?" Guardian, Feb. 19, 2003, reprinted at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/comment/story/0,,898438,00.html>; George Monbiot, "A Charter to Intervene," Guardian, Mar. 23, 2004, reprinted at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/comment/story/0,,898438,00.html>.