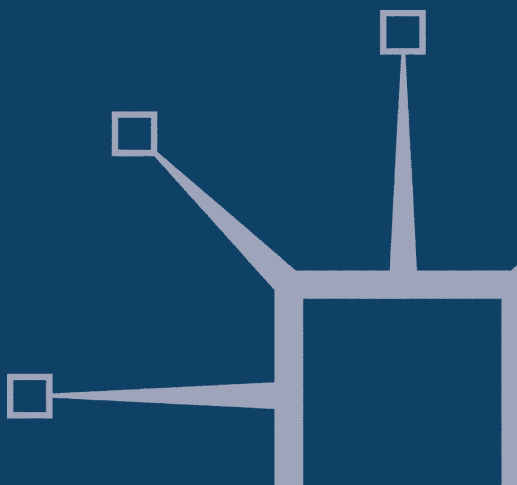
palgrave
macmillan

Political Warfare against the Kremlin

US and British Propaganda Policy at the Beginning of the Cold War

Lowell H. Schwartz



Political Warfare against the Kremlin

Global Conflict and Security since 1945

Editors: Professor Saki R. Dockrill, King's College London and Dr. William Rosenau, RAND

Palgrave Macmillan's new book series *Global Conflict and Security since 1945* seeks fresh historical perspectives to promote the empirical understanding of global conflict and security issues arising from international law, leadership, politics, multilateral operations, weapons systems and technology, intelligence, civil-military relations and societies. The series welcomes original and innovative approaches to the subject by new and established scholars. Possible topics include terrorism, nationalism, civil wars, the Cold War, military and humanitarian interventions, nation-building, pre-emptive attacks, the role of the United Nations and other non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and the national security and defence policies of major states. Events in the world since September 11th 2001 remind us that differences of ideology, religion and values and beliefs held by a group of societies or people affect the security of ordinary peoples and different societies often without warning. The series is designed to deepen our understanding of the recent past and seeks to make a significant contribution to the debates on conflict and security in the major world capitals.

Titles in the series include:

Vesselin Dimitrov
STALIN'S COLD WAR: SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY, DEMOCRACY AND COMMUNISM IN BULGARIA 1941–48

James Ellison
UNITED STATES, BRITAIN AND THE TRANSATLANTIC CRISIS
Rising to the Gaullist Challenge, 1963–1968

Peter Lowe
CONTENDING WITH NATIONALISM AND COMMUNISM
British Policy Towards South-East Asia, 1945–65

Jon Roper
THE UNITED STATES AND THE LEGACY OF THE VIETNAM WAR

Lowell H. Schwartz
POLITICAL WARFARE AGAINST THE KREMLIN
US and British Propaganda Policy at the Beginning of the Cold War

T.O. Smith
BRITAIN AND THE ORIGINS OF THE VIETNAM WAR
UK Policy in Indo-China, 1943–50

Forthcoming titles:

Ken Young
WEAPONS SYSTEMS AND THE POLITICS OF INTERDEPENDENCE

Global Conflict and Security since 1945
Series Standing Order ISBN 978-0-230-52123-0 hardcover

(*outside North America only*)

You can receive future titles in this series as they are published by placing a standing order. Please contact your bookseller or, in case of difficulty, write to us at the address below with your name and address, the title of the series and one of the ISBNs quoted above.

Customer Services Department, Macmillan Distribution Ltd, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS, England

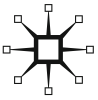
---

Political Warfare against the Kremlin

US and British Propaganda Policy at the Beginning of the Cold War

Lowell H. Schwartz
RAND Corporation

palgrave
macmillan



Softcover reprint of the hardcover 1st edition 2009 978-0-230-22114-7

First published 2009 by
PALGRAVE MACMILLAN

Palgrave Macmillan in the UK is an imprint of Macmillan Publishers Limited, registered in England, company number 785998, of Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS.

Palgrave Macmillan in the US is a division of St Martin's Press LLC, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010.

Palgrave Macmillan is the global academic imprint of the above companies and has companies and representatives throughout the world.

Palgrave® and Macmillan® are registered trademarks in the United States, the United Kingdom, Europe and other countries

ISBN 978-1-349-30666-4 ISBN 978-0-230-23693-6 (eBook)
DOI 10.1057/9780230236936

This book is printed on paper suitable for recycling and made from fully managed and sustained forest sources. Logging, pulping and manufacturing processes are expected to conform to the environmental regulations of the country of origin.

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

A catalog record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
18 17 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 09

Contents

Acknowledgments

The long and winding road to this book began when I entered the War Studies Department at King's College. At first, I proposed another topic for my Ph.D. thesis on counter-terrorism but I quickly realized that my heart was not in it. After extensive discussion with my advisor, Mike Rainsborough, we settled on Cold War propaganda as an appropriate topic for my thesis. It was Professor Rainsborough who suggested we should bring someone in with more knowledge about Cold War history to help advise me, although he remained a vital presence through out the thesis process.

This is when I first met Saki Dockrill, who has guided my research in this area since 2003. It is hard to list all of the ways Professor Dockrill has assisted me. They have ranged from filling in the blanks in my knowledge of British Cold War history to the well-deserved stern warnings I received that my current efforts were not up to the high standards she expected of me. After my thesis was completed she encouraged me to submit the manuscript to Palgrave Macmillan, believing it was appropriate for the book series she and William Rosenau were editing. I am very grateful to Saki for everything she has done for me and how despite her recent illness she has continued to battle relentlessly on my behalf.

My colleagues and friends at the RAND Corporation deserve special mention for their support and advice in the completion of this work. It was William Rosenau who first suggested I attend King's College for my Ph.D. and who suggested I turn my thesis into a book. My group managers at RAND, Richard Darilek and Robert Johnson, provided me with the time away from RAND I needed to complete it and perhaps more importantly assurance that the time and attention I was devoting to it would pay off.

I carried out my research at a number of archives and libraries in the United States and Britain. All of them were helpful in directing me to the archival materials most appropriate to my topic. I am very thankful for the kind staffs at the Harry S. Truman Library; the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library; the Hoover Institution Archives; the National Archives, College Park, Maryland; the National Archives, Kew, London; the BBC Written Archives; and the Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives.

At Palgrave Macmillan, I want to thank my editors Michael Strange and Ruth Ireland. At critical junctures both of them showed patience with a nervous first-time author filled with a host of questions about how to prepare a book for production.

Along the way of preparing this book I received a great deal of advice from friends and colleagues. Two are deserving of special mention. Angel

Rabasa, a colleague at RAND, helped me to make the connection between my work on the Cold War and our contemporary problems in the Middle East. Our joint work in this area helped me to focus on the key similarities and differences between the two eras, which greatly contributed to the concluding chapter of this book. Alban Webb, whom I meet through the always energetic Peter Hennessy, was a great help in broadening my understanding of the BBC during the early years of the Cold War. He pointed me toward key sources and our conversations together over e-mail and in person always assisted me in putting things in the appropriate context.

Three veterans of Radio Liberty who were there from the beginning kindly agreed to my interview requests. Gene Sosin and his wife Gloria hosted me for an entire afternoon, regaling me with tales of their time in New York and Germany and providing me with invaluable information on the early years of Radio Liberty. This included a first look at my manuscript, on which they gently corrected me where I was mistaken. I also conducted interviews with Jim Critchlow and Ross Johnson, who filled in many of the blank spots in my research. Ross Johnson also helped sponsor the Conference on Cold War Broadcasting Impact at Stanford, California, which provided me with an opportunity to discuss my research with scholars and broadcasters from around the world.

Finally and most importantly I owe a great debt to my family. My parents, Morton and Mina Schwartz, read drafts of the manuscript, assisting me both in substance and in correcting my notorious problems of spelling and grammar. Even when I was down they were supportive, and they always let me know how proud they were of the work their son was doing. It is hard to describe in mere words all of the efforts of my wife Debbie toward making this book possible. First she followed me across the ocean to an unknown future in London. Then she put up with our poverty, our terrible living conditions in Wolfson House, and my general bad mood about starting out our life in this manner. Later, she steadfastly stuck with me when I wanted to give up, encouraging me and reading late into the night my last drafts while balancing her own workload. Her love in all things makes possible whatever small things I accomplish in life.

Pittsburgh, PA
September 2008

Abbreviations

AMCOMLIB	American Committee for the Liberation from Bolshevism
AP	Associated Press
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CAB	Cabinet (British)
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
COI	Central Office of Information (British)
Cominform	Communist Information Bureau
Comintern	Communist International
COS	Chiefs of Staff (British)
CRD	Cultural Relations Department of the Foreign Office
DDEL	Dwight D. Eisenhower Library
DEF	Ministry of Defence (British)
DOD	Department of Defense (American)
ECA	Economic Cooperation Administration
FEC	Free Europe Committee (also NCFE)
FO	Foreign Office
FORD	Foreign Office Research Department
FRUS	Foreign Relations of the United States
HIA	Hoover Institution Archives
HSTL	Harry S. Truman Library
IDC	Imperial Defence College
IIA	International Information Agency (American)
IMP	International Motion Picture Division
INP	International Press and Publication Division
IIS	International Information Services (American)
IOD	International Organization Division in CIA (American)
IPD	Information Policy Department (British)
IRD	Information Research Department of the Foreign Office
KGB	Soviet secret services 1954–1991
LHCMA	Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives
MI6	Secret Intelligence Service (also SIS, British)
MIT	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
MP	Member of Parliament
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCFE	National Committee for a Free Europe (also FEC)
NKVD	Soviet secret services 1934–1943
NSC	National Security Council
OCB	Operations Coordinating Board

OIC	Office of International Information and Cultural Affairs (American)
OPC	Office of Policy Coordination
OSS	Office of Strategic Services (American)
OWI	Office of War Information
PPS	Policy Planning Staff of the State Department (American)
PSB	Psychological Strategy Board
PUSC	Permanent Under-Secretary Committee (British)
PUSD	Permanent Under-Secretary's Department (British)
PRO	Public Record Office
PSB	Psychological Strategy Board
PWE	Political Warfare Executive (British)
RFE	Radio Free Europe
RFE-RL/CA	Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Corporate Archives
RG	Record Group
RIAS	Radio in the American Sector
RL	Radio Liberation/Radio Liberty
SIS	Secret Intelligence Service (also MI6, British)
SOE	Special Operations Executive (British)
SRU	Soviet Relations Committee
SSU	Strategic Services Unit (American)
UN	United Nations
UP	United Press
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USIA	United States Information Agency
VOA	Voice of America
WAC	Written Archives Centre
WAY	World Assembly of Youth

This page intentionally left blank

Introduction

In the introduction to his 1997 book *Parting the Curtain*, Walter Hixson wrote that "no systematic study exists on the efforts to use propaganda and culture as a weapon in the Cold War."[1] While this may have been the case in 1997, since then a tremendous increase has occurred in the study of Cold War rhetoric and propaganda, including the use of propaganda as a weapon in the Cold War. Since 2006 major works have appeared on the role of propaganda in the foreign policy of the US Eisenhower Administration (1953–61), the development of Britain's anti-Communist propaganda policy, and British and American propaganda policy toward the Middle East.[2] These studies built on earlier work done in the United States and Britain, most notably the path-breaking work of Walter Hixson, Philip Taylor, and Scott Lucas, all of whom stressed the vital role ideology, propaganda, and culture played in the history of the Cold War.[3]

What accounts for this new interest in Cold War propaganda? One explanation is the contribution made to Cold War history by the opening of archives in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Recent work using these materials described as "the new Cold War history" reflects a reappraisal by some scholars of the role culture and ideology played in the Cold War.[4] Evidence from Communist archives has shown a strong tendency on the Communists' part to act according to ideological principles more often than was believed by Western academics at the time.[5] Recent work has also shown the importance Communist leaders attached to the ideological contest between East and West.[6] Historian Vojtech Mastny, noting the "significance" of the Soviet Union's "ideological underpinnings" as an explanation for Soviet policy, wrote "unless evidence is produced to the contrary, at least its [the Soviet Union's] professed principles should be taken seriously rather than as mere window dressing or camouflage for something else."[7] The significance of ideology as an explanation for Soviet policy has in turn caused scholars to reconsider the West's own propaganda efforts and what impact, if any, these efforts had on the course of the Cold War.

A second reason for scholars' new interest in Cold War propaganda is the development of a new ideological conflict between radical Islam and liberal democracy. As was the case with the Cold War, leaders in the United States and Britain have begun to acknowledge that the so-called global war on terrorism cannot be won through military means alone and that propaganda has an important role to play in the conflict. Former US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld noted in an internal memorandum to military leaders that the Department of Defense "lacked metrics to know if we are winning or losing the global war on terror." In the memorandum Rumsfeld defined winning as "capturing, killing or deterring and *dissuading* more terrorists" than radical clerics could recruit, train, and deploy against the United States.[8]

US and British policymakers have not only identified the battle for hearts and minds in the Arab world as a key component of winning the global war on terrorism, they also have explicitly pointed to the West's efforts during the Cold War as an example of what public diplomacy and information programs can achieve.[9] Former US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has repeatedly cited the work of Voice of America, Radio Free Europe, and Radio Liberty as vital to the West's victory in the Cold War.[10] For this reason policymakers on both sides of the Atlantic are interested in deriving lessons from the United State's and Britain's experiences in the Cold War and determining the applicability of these lessons to the Muslim world today.

This book seeks to contribute to the rapidly evolving field of Cold War history by providing a comparative study of American and British propaganda policy and the implementation of these policies during the first 15 years of the Cold War. To provide an example of how British and American propaganda actually operated, the book focuses on British and American propaganda efforts directed toward the people of the Soviet Union between 1945 and 1960. A number of works have been published on the early Cold War propaganda policies of Britain or the United States, including their efforts directed at the Soviet Union, but none so far has specifically compared and contrasted the two nations' efforts.[11]

The comparative nature of the present study is one element that sets it apart from previous work. Andrew Defty's excellent book *Britain, America, and Anti-Communist Propaganda* does review American propaganda efforts between 1945 and 1953, but this is mostly done to highlight the impact American propaganda and foreign policy had on British propaganda efforts. Kenneth Osgood's *Total Cold War* reviews the Eisenhower Administration's propaganda efforts, but it is not a comparative study. In addition, this study, following Walter Hixson's lead in *Parting the Curtain*, covers the first 15 years of Cold War propaganda policy. Covering this longer time frame provides the opportunity to explore the changes in British and American propaganda policy that occurred as Soviet leadership shifted from Stalin to Khrushchev. Many scholarly works such as Gregory Mitrovich's *Undermining the Kremlin*

or Scott Lucas's *Freedom's War* either fail to note the changes made in American and British propaganda policy that occurred during the late 1950s or claim that the West in essence gave up on political warfare after 1956. This book will show that, on the contrary, the late 1950s were in many ways a golden age for Western propaganda policy.

British and American Cold War propaganda policies are examined and compared, instead of those of other nations, for several reasons. First, the limitation of the historical comparisons to only two nations allows the presentation of a fairly complete historical narrative over a 15-year time period. Limiting the historical case studies to two also reduces the complexity of the task, requiring the mastery of only two nations' reactions to the Soviet threat in the early years of the Cold War. The second reason the United States and Britain are compared is the availability of extensive and similar primary source material on this topic. This allows historical comparisons to be based upon primary documentations and minimizes the need to rely on secondary sources.

The third reason US and British propaganda policies were chosen for comparison lies in the specific historical circumstances of each nation during this period. US propaganda policy is explored because after the Second World War the United States emerged as the world's pre-eminent power. Its propaganda policy, as was the case with its economic and military policies, had a profound effect on the evolution of the Cold War and on the actions of other actors in the international system.

British propaganda policy is investigated for a different reason. British power between 1945 and 1960 was in decline in comparison with that of the United States and the Soviet Union. However, in the area of propaganda Britain remained a major power with an extensive knowledge base of how propaganda worked and what it could and could not achieve. Britain was the first Western power to adopt a coordinated government response to Communist propaganda, and its propaganda played a major role in shaping public attitudes toward Communism in Western and Eastern Europe. In the words of former Foreign Minister Douglas Hurd, in the field of propaganda Britain continued to "punch above its weight" in the early years of the Cold War.[12] These differing historical circumstances provide a rich source of historical material explaining the similarities and differences between British and US propaganda policies.

Another unique element of this book is its methodology for analyzing propaganda activities. It is the thesis of this book that Cold War propaganda policy and propaganda policy in general can be properly understood only if it is examined on three different levels. These levels can be thought of as a hierarchy. At the top level of the hierarchy are senior policymakers who are responsible for setting propaganda strategy and policy. The middle level consists of the organizations responsible for planning and coordinating propaganda efforts. The final and lowest level of the hierarchy consists of

the information and communication instruments that design and produce material for foreign audiences. For the third level of propaganda analysis this book has chosen to examine the propaganda instruments that were directed at influencing the people of the Soviet Union. Exploring all three levels of propaganda policy provides a complete picture of the similarities and differences between British and American propaganda policy and efforts. Looking at all three levels also allows us to understand how various components of propaganda policy interacted and why some policies were more or less successful than others.

In studying the three levels of propaganda policy noted above, this book combines several areas of scholarship that are normally considered to exist separately. On the top level of the hierarchy are high-level policymakers—presidents, prime ministers, foreign ministers, and secretaries of state, among others—who set each nation's foreign policy strategy and goals in the post-war years. This is the realm of traditional diplomatic history. This area of Cold War studies is important to the study of propaganda policy because it illuminates the relationship between propaganda policy and the broader foreign policy objectives of each nation. It is also at this top level that the organizational structures of propaganda policy are set. Because this book investigates propaganda policy between 1945 and 1960, it also examines the diplomatic history of the origins of the Cold War and its evolution throughout the 1950s. There is of course a vast amount of literature on the evolution of British and American Cold War policies, and it is not the intent of this work to duplicate the scholarly debate on this subject found elsewhere.[13]

Instead, the goal of this work is to explain how propaganda policy and the origins of Britain's and the United States' anti-Communist propaganda campaigns fit into the broader foreign policy decisions made at this time. Through the prism of propaganda policy this book also investigates the intense foreign policy debates in both nations about how to deal with their Second World War ally, the Soviet Union, and what role each nation should play in the post-war world. Reviewing these debates reveals the close linkage between decisions about British and American grand Cold War strategy and each nation's propaganda efforts. These debates also demonstrate the goals and objectives senior policymakers set for propaganda policy and provide insights into policymakers' perceptions of what constituted a successful outcome for each nation's propaganda efforts.

The second level of propaganda policy examined is the organization, planning, and coordination of political warfare efforts. Scholarship in this area reveals the wide differences in the national security structures of the United States and Britain. In Britain, the Secret Intelligence Services, including the Information Research Department (IRD), the nerve center of Britain's anti-Communist propaganda efforts, remained inside the Foreign Office. Although the IRD was publicly listed as part of the Foreign Office,