

in the course of...assimilation.”⁴⁰

By using Lawford’s letter, Woodsworth betrayed his own biases. Both men had graduated in 1896 from the Methodist Church’s Wesley College, Canada’s centre for training in the Social Gospel. (See pp.26-28.) Emery said Lawford “seemed unable to surmount a personal dislike for the Ukrainians.” Lawford said he feared they might have “a most baneful influence on our nation throughout.”⁴¹ Emery outlined Lawford’s efforts to use Methodism to convert, and free, Ukrainians from their Catholic and Orthodox faiths. Lawford disliked Ukrainian priests saying they exerted a bondage over their flocks that was “worse than any African slavery.”⁴²

Woodsworth’s report on Ukrainians, included a 1911 letter from Rev. W.H. Pike who, like Woodsworth, had graduated from the Methodist’s Victoria College in Toronto.⁴³ Pike’s letter said he entered an Edmonton dance hall to gather intelligence on Ukrainian youth culture. In describing a man there, Pike says he “led him on to tell me of their ideas and ideals.” Pike described the youth’s “desire for a life of freedom from priest-craft, from shallowness and hypocrisy, from fear of purgatory and divine wrath.” Methodists like Pike and Woodsworth shared this young man’s critique of Ukrainian churches. However, they were even more irked when young Ukrainians—like this dance-hall youth—

embraced atheist socialism by saying that: “we have come to Canada and we are going to be free; it’s a free country and we are not going to be slaves of priests or pope or church.... The best thing for us is socialism.”⁴⁴

In *Five Missionary Minutes* (1912), Pike voiced his fear of Ukrainian socialists. “How are we going to deal with the type of Socialism we find among these people?” he asked. “It is a mixture of socialism, infidelity, and Christianity. They have a false idea of freedom and throw off all religious restraint.”⁴⁵ (J.S. said he was “indebted” to Pike “for assisting in the intensive study of farms in selected districts.”⁴⁶)

Woodsworth’s virulent contempt for Marxism, and for the atheist strain of socialism, was an ideology he shared with Canada’s political, corporate and religious elites. He was, “of course... [an] anti-Marxist and anti-Communist,”⁴⁷ who defined his politics “in contradistinction to Marxism,” said Mills. “At the bottom of his quarrel with Marxism was a disagreement over the nature of economic class.”⁴⁸

Woodsworth was hostile to the Marxist narrative that social change is won through “class struggle.” To Woodsworth, success came by finding common ground with one’s adversaries. Although he always pushed for cooperation between rival classes, like workers and bosses, he refused to allow any cooperation with Marxist so-

cialists. He even opposed forming a “common front” with them against Fascism.

Just as Woodsworth derided Marxist narratives, communists spent decades criticising his compromising brand of bourgeois socialism. In 1919, an activist with BC’s radical Socialist Party called his theories “consummate twaddle.”⁴⁹ A decade later, the Communist Party (CP) labelled him a “Pacifist Flunkey of the Ruling Class.”⁵⁰ In 1932, renowned Canadian poet Dorothy Livesay echoed the CP narrative that his watered-down, “pink” socialism made bedfellows of “Capital and Labor.”⁵¹

In 1934, Woodsworth dissolved the Ontario CCF for cooperating with the Canadian Labour Defence League (CLDL).⁵² With 350 branches and 17,000 members by 1933, the CLDL defended militant unionists in court. It also collected 459,000 signatures to repeal Section 98, a repressive law used to intern radicals, including leaders of the CP.⁵³ (See pp.42, 45.)

While some Woodsworth fans are inspired by Marxist ideals, Mills said this shows how “myth can embroider reality, for Woodsworth was, of course, a militant anti-Marxist.”⁵⁴ “Discovering the ‘real’ Woodsworth requires putting aside myth,” said Mills, to get “beyond the hagiography which masquerades as biography.”⁵⁵

Mills’ own book on Woodsworth is a case in point. He used much sophistry to argue that Woodsworth was not a racist.⁵⁶

The Next Generation: Charles Woodsworth, Our Man in Saigon

By Richard Sanders

In exploring the Woodsworth family tradition of cooperating with empire, it is worth examining the career of J.S. Woodsworth’s oldest son. Born in 1909, Charles grew up to be editor-in-chief of the *Ottawa Citizen* (1948-1955). But besides being the paper’s key gatekeeper, he also made it into the news.

In 1949, after the ethnic cleansing of 957,000 Palestinians from their homeland,¹ Woodsworth went to Israel. He praised it as a “democratic” and “progressive socialist state” leading “a social revolution...long overdue in the Middle East,” which he called “one of the most backward areas in the world.” Israel, he said, “could not afford” to “absorb the 250,000 Arab refugees...inside her borders.”² He praised heavily-fortified *kibbutzim* that, “like stockade[s] against Red Indians,... guard colonizers and defend Jewish homeland against enemies.”³

Woodsworth was a Cold Warrior. In 1952, he told the Canadian Citizenship

Council (CCC): “Let us not try to minimize the dangers of Communism.... Let us see it for the reactionary and brutal thing it is.”⁴ During the 1950s and 60s, the CCC was an agency of assimilation funded by the government’s right-wing, Citizenship Branch. (The Branch sought “the integration of new immigrants, ethnic minorities, and Indians.”⁵ See p.47.)

Charles soon became a diplomat. After a posting to the US (1956-1960), he became Canada’s point man on the International Commission for Supervision and Control (ICSC) in Saigon (1960-1961).⁶ In *Quiet Complicity: Canadian Involvement in the Vietnam War*, Victor Levant said Canada’s role on the ICSC was “characterised by partisan voting, wilful distortion of fact, and complicity in US violations of both the Geneva and Paris agreements.”⁷ Woodsworth’s duplicity in this charade was revealed by the US Ambassador to Saigon in a secret cable describing Woodsworth’s detailed suggestions on how US troops and war materials should

be smuggled into Vietnam without alerting the international commission overseeing the ceasefire.⁸

Charles Woodsworth later served Canada as ambassador to South Africa, Ethiopia, Somalia and Madagascar.

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