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The next most important British personage in Moscow? The BBC and Soviet Union during the early decades of the Cold War

James Rodgers

Introduction: journalists join a wartime alliance

That evening, a Soviet dictator welcomed correspondents from capitalist newspapers to the Kremlin. In the fall of 1941, Hitler's forces having attacked the Soviet Union the previous summer, the Soviet leadership was entertaining a delegation from its new allies: the United States and the United Kingdom. The delegation was led by the American diplomat, Averell Harriman, and the British press baron, Lord Beaverbrook. They had come to discuss military aid to the Soviet Union. The Soviets may have been short of materiel, and, now at war, in places short of food—but the guests at the banquet would not have guessed. Nor was there any lack of 'red wine, white wine, champagne, and always vodka,' as one of the correspondents, the American journalist, Quentin Reynolds, recalled in a memoir of his assignment published the following year.¹ Apparently ever cautious and watchful, however, the host, Stalin himself, drank only 'a light red Georgian wine. No one could call Stalin a tippler.'² As Sheila Fitzpatrick has written of the wartime Soviet leader's view of western correspondents, 'their real function was to discredit the Soviet Union, which made them essentially spies.'³ Stalin and his fellow revolutionaries had not forgotten that Britain had been among those countries that had sent troops to try to destroy the young Soviet republic as it struggled to establish itself in the years following the October revolution in 1917. Britain's

prime minister, Winston Churchill, had never made any secret of his loathing of communism. As David Reynolds and Vladimir Pechatnov have put it, ‘Churchill’s vehement opposition to socialism and communism had been the lodestar of his domestic and foreign policies ever since the 1920s.’⁴ For all this suspicion and profound ideological difference, this was a time in European history when such divisions could be—at least temporarily—put to one side. A letter to Stalin that Churchill had sent with Beaverbrook concluded, ‘With heartfelt wishes for the success of the Russian armies, and of the ruin of the Nazi tyrants.’⁵ Some weeks later, Stalin sent Churchill birthday greetings.⁶ As the correspondents’ presence at the Kremlin banquet showed, the alliance needed events, and witnesses to those events who would relay their accounts to mass audiences, to make it real for the populations of the allied countries as they battled with the dangers and privations of war.

This strong sense of common purpose offered opportunities to British and American correspondents to cover the war from the Soviet side: opportunities that they would never have had if they had not been allies. British opposition to the Bolshevik regime had, for example, meant that *The Times* had had no resident correspondent in Russia since Robert Wilton had left in 1917. After that, *The Times* had covered Soviet Russia—including such events as the show trials of the 1930s—from neighbouring Latvia. Now some restrictions were relaxed, and some more western reporters were allowed to join the small press corps in the Soviet capital. Huge obstacles of censorship and access remained, of course. This was a time when the Soviet official in charge of relations with the foreign press, Solomon Lozovsky, would remind correspondents, pleading to be allowed to travel closer to the front

lines, that the requirements of Soviet military security were paramount. ‘I would rather have fifty discontented journalists in Moscow than fifty dead Russian soldiers on the battlefield,’⁷ Lozovsky told the eager and frustrated foreign correspondents. Yet some of those journalists did manage to tell stories to wartime audiences that would enable them to share a sense of the experience of ordinary people in an allied if alien land: the Soviet Union. When, in the aftermath of victory, that alliance collapsed and gave way to Cold War, western news organizations were left with new challenges of how to cover life in the new Soviet superpower.

The Coming of the Cold War

The challenge was especially daunting for the BBC. Having bolstered its international reputation during the war, as radio became the dominant news medium— ‘every correspondent in a foreign country now, of course, relies on the radio both for news and official propaganda’,⁸ wrote Charlotte Haldane, a pioneering woman among those reporters permitted to enter the Soviet Union to cover the war. The BBC’s experience between the end of the Second World War in 1945, and their opening a bureau in Moscow in 1963, is a story that sheds light on the political, diplomatic, and editorial pressures the corporation faced in a Europe, and a world, divided by ideological differences. It is also a story of a news organization that strove to understand and explain despite the ideological obstacles placed in its path. Radio broadcasts became one of the few links between that could cross a divided Europe.

Of course, ideological differences had never disappeared as the Soviet Union and its western allies tried to balance the competing demands of building an alliance robust enough

to defeat Hitler, while taking care not to cede ground—ideological or physical—in the new world that would follow victory. Churchill was especially vigilant against any sign of communist influence at the BBC. This was not his first confrontation with the corporation. In 1926, during a general strike in Britain, he had tried to take over the BBC's airwaves for the purposes of spreading only the government's version of events. Now that he was leading the country in a World War, the *Internationale* – at that time, the Soviet national anthem – was not to be played on the BBC along with the national anthems of other allies.⁹ Later in the war, Churchill shared with this cabinet his true opinion of the BBC, which he described as 'a nest of Communists'.¹⁰ Not having a correspondent in the Soviet Union at the outbreak of war, the BBC eventually settled on Alexander Werth, then a correspondent for *The Sunday Times*, who had been born in pre-revolutionary St Petersburg and whose family had fled the coming of Soviet power. The BBC archives reveal that this was not a straightforward process. A list of possible candidates for BBC Moscow correspondent, circulated in July 1941—a month after the German invasion of the Soviet Union—includes Joseph Macleod, then a radio announcer. 'Has been in Russia for a short time and is very keen on Soviet culture,' the assessment runs, 'has contacts in Russian radio, is keen to go, and would probably be accepted by Soviet Embassy where he is known.' However, it goes on, 'his pro-Soviet sympathies would make him an easy victim of Soviet propaganda.'¹¹ Macleod did get his chance in a different way. Because of the technical difficulties of sending broadcast-quality material from the Soviet Union, Werth would often send his despatches by cable to London, where they would be read out on the air by another—often Macleod. Werth's regular broadcast, *Russian Commentary*, could soon expect to draw in more than four million listeners.¹²

As Werth's wartime audience success showed, there was an appetite for news from the Soviet Union. Werth, though, was a freelance, and his commitments to *The Sunday Times* meant that the BBC could only count on a limited use of his time. He did, though, report for the BBC from Stalingrad after the battle that ended in German defeat in early February 1943—arguably the point at which the tide of war in the European theatre began to turn in the allies' favour. Twelve months later, and perhaps already anticipating where the power in post-war Europe might lie, the BBC's director general (referred to then, as still within the BBC, as the 'D.G.') went to visit the Soviet ambassador to London to raise the possibility of the BBC being allowed to send a correspondent to Moscow. A terse BBC internal memo recording the outcome of the meeting makes it quite clear that he came away empty-handed.

D.G. and editor in chief went to see the Soviet Ambassador the other day and got no change at all. The Ambassador was extremely chilly. He did say he would 'consult his committee' whatever that may mean; but D.G. was left with the impression that nothing is likely to come of it. He does not propose to raise the matter again through this channel.¹³ The foreign press corps in the Soviet capital was already dwindling after the war, not all the departures voluntary. The correspondent for the U.S. broadcaster, CBS, Ed Fleming, was expelled after being accused of 'tearing up a heavily edited script and throwing it in the face of a censor'.¹⁴ Currency reform in late 1947 made operating in Moscow even more expensive than it previously had been.¹⁵ To these practical difficulties were added a rapidly worsening diplomatic climate. With victory for the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States came renewed ideological confrontation between the wartime allies. In September 1949, the newly arrived correspondent for the *New York Times*, Harrison Salisbury, reported

on the fact that *Pravda* had mocked President Harry S. Truman for his assertion that the Soviet Union would lose the ‘Cold War’.¹⁶ The phrase was new enough then that it appeared in inverted commas—but novelty in this case did not mean temporary. It would define international relations for more than four decades. Technology was changing, too. If, as in the words of Susan Carruthers, during the Second World War ‘Technological developments placed radio at the centre of this information war,’ that was fought out alongside the actual combat, radio was also at the centre of the propaganda battle in the early Cold War.¹⁷ The biggest challenge for the BBC, as with other international news organizations, was how to cover the politics and life of an ideological foe that loomed large on the other side of Europe, and in which Stalin’s distrust of foreign correspondents as spies still very much informed official policy. That meant limited access to sources and information. In addition, an unfavourable rouble rate to the pound sterling—not subject to the vicissitudes of international currency exchange, but fixed by the Soviet authorities—meant that even a one-person operation there would be expensive. As one producer wrote in an internal memorandum as early as January 1948, ‘Expenses have become increasingly heavy, especially since the currency reform, and the cost of maintaining a correspondent there does not justify the results. Moreover, the censorship is difficult.’¹⁸ This clear-eyed assessment, so succinctly expressed, perhaps hinted at a bright future for the young author of the note. C. J. (Charles John) Curran later himself became ‘D.G.’¹⁹

An iron curtain for the airwaves

Just as radio had been the dominant medium, in Charlotte Haldane’s words, for news and propaganda during the Second World War, so it remained in the Cold War—except that, in the

1950s, the Soviet priority became the creation of a barrier to the airwaves to complement the iron curtain that had fallen across the continent. It was in this sense a time of contrasts. After his death in 1953, Stalin was succeeded by Nikita Khrushchev. Khrushchev enjoyed courting the foreign press, even chatting to them at diplomatic receptions. ‘He always liked to have a coterie of us about because he could talk to us and we could then report stuff and he would get kudos in the Politburo’ remembered Robert Elphick, who was posted to Moscow as a Reuters correspondent in 1958.²⁰ Yet censorship remained. Although it was lifted for reporters from communist media in 1955—presumably because the censors felt they could be trusted—it stayed in force for correspondents from ‘bourgeois’ media (the Soviets operated a two-tier system) until 1961. To censorship was added the jamming of broadcasts, the BBC naturally included. In the late 1950s, the BBC produced a series of papers on ‘BBC concerns with the Soviet Union’. The fact that at times their broadcasts could not be received at all was, not surprisingly, a central issue. Discussion of the matter with the Soviets began ‘in 1955 to 1956—and continued when contacts permitted, though the jamming itself predictably followed in parallel with the political climate. When, in April 1956, Khrushchev and the Soviet premier, Nikolai Bulganin, came to Britain for an official visit, ‘Soviet jamming of the BBC broadcasts in Russia had ceased. Jamming of BBC Russian broadcasts was resumed on 28 October 1956, five days after the outbreak of the Hungarian revolution. As a result, the negotiations of exchanges with Soviet Radio were (*sic.*) suspended.’²¹ The Soviet authorities did not want the BBC’s version of the crushing of the Hungarian uprising shared with Soviet audiences—though nor did they want their habit of jamming the BBC to mar the leadership’s visit to the U.K. earlier in the year. Other papers in the BBC written archives tend to confirm

this, including as they do an exchange of messages discussing a draft letter from the British prime minister, Harold Macmillan, to Bulganin the following year to complain about the jamming that by then had not only resumed, but continued.²² The BBC documents show Soviet reasons for jamming to be a disingenuous part of a Cold War game. ‘The stock Soviet argument during discussions in Moscow was that BBC Russian broadcasts were offensive to the Soviet people and had to be jammed because the Soviet people did not want to listen to them.’²³ This stretched credulity, especially in a country that had confiscated all private radio sets following the German invasion of June 1941.²⁴ Even allowing for extra caution in wartime, it betrayed a Soviet attitude to the circulation of information that had not radically altered even with Khrushchev’s ‘thaw’. The same BBC document notes that, ‘It was pointed out that on principle the BBC does not post news correspondents, or carry out analogous programme operations where there is censorship or similar restraint on outgoing material.’²⁵ That the BBC participated in these talks at all, at least until they broke down, reflects how importantly they viewed the Soviet Union in that era. Given the lack of common ground, or scope for progress on basic issues such as jamming and censorship, it is little surprise that, during the 1950s, while Khrushchev may have been more open than Stalin with foreign newspaper and agency correspondents in Moscow, the BBC debate about trying to station a correspondent there was closed. While the BBC did not jam Radio Moscow broadcasts, it had other ways of responding. An appendix to another paper, ‘Details of relations since October 1956 lists the occasions when Radio Moscow were refused facilities to broadcast sporting events. These included a ‘friendly’—a football term that perhaps sits uneasily in the context of the Cold War—match between England and the Soviet Union in October 1958.²⁶ ‘It seems

to the BBC to be unreasonable for the Soviet Radio to expect to be given facilities to enable them to cover an event in the United Kingdom while Soviet jamming is endeavouring to prevent BBC coverage of the same event from reaching the Russian public.²⁷ Perhaps the Soviet authorities and their broadcast representatives came to consider themselves fortunate. The Soviet Union lost 5-0.

Monitoring mockery of capitalism

While they did not jam Soviet broadcasts, they did take the trouble to listen to them, monitoring Radio Moscow's English output in which the listener might learn how 'imperialists have slandered the culture of the East by calling it backward', and that 'the first thing the invaders did in Africa was to plunder it and send home all the cultural valuables of the African peoples. These can now be seen in the museums of Europe and America.'²⁸ There was also acerbic commentary on the vicissitudes of capitalism. 'The stakes were too high for the top-hatted lords of the Stock Exchange to resist. Patriotism was the first casualty in the mad scramble for dollars,' declared one broadcast on the purchase by buyers from the United States of British Aluminium, 'now in the hands of an alien power.'²⁹ The waves of anti-capitalist propaganda that rose in Moscow to break across the world demonstrates that Haldane's wartime assessment of radio's value remained as relevant as ever now that war had turned to Cold War. The curiosity about the other was evident on both sides—and was discussed not only in broadcasting circles, but in diplomatic despatches, too. One British Foreign Office document from 1956, a copy of which is held in the BBC archives, relays reports of university students in Moscow making their own translations of BBC news

broadcasts, and sharing them among their classmates. The despatch wonders if this might be encouraged by the provision of broadcasts in slowly spoken English.³⁰

With post-1945 Europe divided into two ideological blocs, radio was a connection across fortified borders and barbed wire: but the politics of the time meant that it was a connection that was often impeded by jamming. Where it was not, it gave one side a glimpse of the other.

It was the tantalising prospect of just such glimpses, and the wider understanding to which they could lead, that led the BBC to continue to investigate the possibility of opening a bureau in the Soviet capital. Opinion was as divided as the continent that the BBC was seeking to cover. 'I must confess I have always doubted the value of having a resident correspondent in Moscow who, it seems to me, would either find it impossible to report freely or else fall out with the authorities', wrote the head of Talks to the Foreign Editor in October 1961.³¹ The BBC Central Europe correspondent, Ian McDougall, based then in Vienna, also offered his own negative views: 'I think that all Moscow cover is a waste of time except for very special occasions.' Moreover, the fact that a permanent correspondent could be 'slung out ... [took] a lot of the fun out of the removal of censorship' (which had been formally lifted earlier that year).³² While the western press corps that had been allowed to grow during the wartime alliance between Moscow, Washington, and London rapidly shrank as the Cold War became the new reality, it did not disappear. As they sought the information, they felt was necessary to decide whether setting up a bureau in Moscow was feasible, or desirable, BBC managers took advantage of the fact that American correspondents based in the Soviet capital sometimes passed through London on leave, or when they had completed their postings.

Conversations with two of them, Donald Connery of *Time* magazine, and Stanley Johnson of the Associated Press, were summarized in impressively detailed memoranda circulated among senior colleagues who might be involved in the decision about whether or not a BBC Moscow bureau would be worth the trouble and cost it would necessarily entail.

Perhaps fittingly, given the Cold War subject matter, the memoranda read in places like intelligence reports. The first American reporter with whom G.H.G Norman had lunch in late 1962 was Donald Connery, of *Time* magazine, ‘a most intelligent and articulate young man,’ as Norman later wrote in his account of the meeting.³³ Connery had a long and distinguished career as an international correspondent, as his obituaries published after his death in early 2021, at the age of 94, recognized. His work in the USSR itself was rather brief. ‘His Soviet Union assignments in 1961 to 1962, notably a 6,000-mile journey on the Trans-Siberian Railroad, eventually led to his expulsion from Moscow,’³⁴ wrote the *Lakeville Journal* and the *Millerton News*, his local newspaper in Connecticut, in the United States. Although in Norman’s account of his lunch with Connery, on 29 November 1962, Norman did relate that ‘Technically he (Connery) was not expelled’—explaining that what actually happened was that Connery’s provisional, three-month, press accreditation was not renewed when it expired, forcing him to leave the country. The result, of course, was the same as formal expulsion. Norman reported that Connery believed—as his obituary would eventually record—that ‘a major cause of his expulsion’ was the journey across Siberia on which he reported for *Time* and *Life*. ‘This revealed to him a Siberia at about the stage of the Pioneering days in the U.S., some 100 years ago,’³⁵ Norman wrote. Visitors to Russia throughout the ages have often been struck by the contrast between life in the capital cities of Moscow and Saint Petersburg, and

the backwardness of life outside, even nearby. In Siberia then the contrast seems to have been especially sharp, with Connery's impression that it was about a century behind the United States. 'Every effort was made to stop him from photographing anything but was new and modern,' wrote Norman. 'Mr Connery thinks that one thing the Russians have against him is that he has seen too much.'

Covert censorship, and ways around it

Connery's expulsion, though, was just one side of Soviet policy at the time. Despite his own personal experience, Connery detected other influences, which seem to have encouraged the BBC to continue to pursue their plan of setting up a bureau in Moscow. 'As his own case showed,' Norman reported of Connery's expulsion, 'the Russians were anxious to appear not to censor.'³⁶ Technically, they had not: waiting instead until they could simply stop his reporting by not renewing his accreditation. Of particular interest to the BBC was what Connery, himself an experienced radio reporter, had to say about the possibilities offered by that medium. The Soviet attitudes he described offered further insight into the authorities' nuanced, even contradictory, attitudes to the press representatives of their Cold War foes. This was a climate in which the Soviets would not wish overtly to censor (censorship having been formally lifted for 'bourgeois' correspondents—the Soviet term for those from non-communist publications or countries in 1961) but would still expel journalists for reporting that showed the Soviet Union in a critical or bad light. In the same way, ideas, commentary, or analysis that would incur the authorities' displeasure were it to appear in an article filed from Moscow did not have the same effect if expressed during a radio interview. Norman's lunch with Connery took place the month after the Cuban missile crisis had seen Moscow and

Washington confront each other in a stand-off that could have ended in nuclear war. Connery suggested that if a correspondent thought up the kind of questions which a man in New York or London would think up (e.g. 'Is there dissension in the Central Committee over the Cuba settlement?') and wrote a straight piece discussing this point, the Russians would regard that as unfriendly.

On the radio, it might be different. 'It was a good defence to be able to reply: 'They put the question to me, and I replied to the best of my ability.' It was also very useful to the Correspondent, who was inevitably cut off.'³⁷ Not useful in the sense of completing the broadcast, perhaps, but useful in the sense that they were able to get their story across, at least in part. The Soviets hardly needed formal censorship when they could literally pull the plug.

Norman's next lunch, just a week or so later, was with Stanley Johnson of the Associated Press, then in London for medical treatment. Johnson, whom Norman, again sliding into investigator or even detective novelist mode, described as 'an immense man, at first somewhat slow and fumbling of speech' had spent years in Moscow and spoke from extensive experience. By the time he and Norman met in December 1962, Johnson was three years into a four-year posting, his second to the Soviet capital.³⁸ Norman decided that the information he got from Johnson was 'in a different category of penetration altogether from that of Mr Connery.'³⁹ Certainly, Johnson was much more clear-eyed about what he saw as the true nature of the Soviet regime. He was decidedly dismissive about any talk of a liberal attitudes of the type that Connery had thought he could detect in the Soviet attitude to the foreign press. 'How often had he read articles by Kremlinologists saying that there was a 'thaw' on, or off, only to find them having to eat their words a few weeks later.'⁴⁰ While

Johnson pointed out that ‘there had, undoubtedly, been a real change after Stalin’s death, which the present rulers were unlikely to reverse. But the means of control remained, and the Communist attitude towards individual freedom was unchanged.’⁴¹

Perhaps the most fascinating insights offered by the account of the conversation with Johnson are those that describe a particular part of Cold War life: the collision of views and expectations formed in a capitalist society with the reality of daily existence under communism. Norman was clearly keen to get as precise an idea as possible of the likely cost of opening a bureau. Where Connery had suggested \$45,000 per annum, Johnson suggested \$50,000, ‘But this figure did not include clothes, particularly those of the correspondent’s wife.’ Norman’s memo goes on to discuss first ‘Wife’ (as a separate heading, immediately following ‘Cost’), before discussing, ‘Accommodation’; ‘Hotels’; ‘Clothes’. ‘The Correspondent and his wife should be a team,’ Norman wrote in his account of the meeting, ‘There was a cocktail party or other reception somewhere every day and it is essential that one should be represented there as it is often at these parties that some of the major newsbreaks occur.’ This fits with Robert Elphick’s experience of meeting Khrushchev at diplomatic social events. The correspondent and wife team would need to keep up appearances. ‘A wife needed a large wardrobe: a minimum, he thought, of 15 cocktail dresses.’ Norman explained further:

It was partly a question of status: the Correspondent of a major organisation like the BBC would be assimilated to a Minister-Counsellor (i.e. the Second person in the

Embassy); and, in the case of the BBC, with its special position, he would probably be considered the next most important British personage in Moscow after the Ambassador.

The memo went on to consider the practical challenges of being seen to hold such elevated status. ‘You couldn’t get a dress or suit cleaned or pressed or mended.’ This must have seemed an even greater inconvenience given that, in Johnson’s telling, ‘Russian food was soon uneatable (*sic.*) and it stank; and the stench somehow pervaded everything everywhere. Even one’s clothes smelt of this: it was a further reason for having so many replacements.’⁴²

Such discussions offer insights into how very different Soviet communist and western capitalist societies were. The broadcaster’s determination to try to work despite them highlights radio’s great importance in the era. Despite ideological divides, there was a strong desire to understand.

While Norman, as acting foreign editor, had to take costs into account, he and his colleagues had also to try to determine whether the large sums they would have to commit to spending could be justified by the coverage that would result. Johnson insisted on the importance of a translator, because ‘one had to comb through Moscow’s fifteen daily newspapers; then there were the periodicals and the literary papers—most important, these’. Nor was the Soviet news agenda like that of the western press. ‘The important news—for a Foreign Correspondent—was often only a few lines on an inside page.’ The paucity of news sources and lack of access beyond the official Soviet media is a subject that both Connery and Johnson remarked upon. Connery related the story of waiting three months for an interview with ‘a doctor who had apparently made a medical break-through.’ Outside Moscow,

Connery's adventures on the Trans-Siberian railway were exceptional. He told Norman that correspondents travelled so little because 'their head offices kept their noses to the Moscow grindstone.' While that may have been true, Johnson offered the more practical impediment: the limit for travel without special permission, 'was 20 miles round Moscow.'

The memoranda that Norman wrote, and the detail in which he recorded his conversations with the correspondents from Moscow show what an alien world the Soviet Union was both professionally and personally for a western journalist. Yet within weeks of the lunch meetings of late 1962, the BBC was moving swiftly towards setting up a bureau. Notes of the Board of Management meeting of 25 February 1963 record the fact that, 'D.G. said he had written to the Soviet ambassador to ask for his advice in the matter of obtaining permission for the BBC to station a correspondent in Moscow.'⁴³ Later that year, Erik de Mauny became the first to hold the position. For all that his appointment might have seemed like a sign that relations between the United Kingdom and the USSR were improving, the politics remained hugely complicated, even affecting editorial decisions in the weeks before de Mauny's departure for the Soviet capital. The Board of Management minutes from 6 May report that Mr de Mauny had been granted a visa and would be in Moscow in time for the Wynne trial. Agreed that, in the circumstances, it would be an inappropriate time to screen the NBC programme on the death of Stalin, even in an edited version.⁴⁴

The 'Wynne trial' is a reference to the case of Greville Wynne, a British businessman convicted of spying against the Soviets. On 11 May 1963, a court in Moscow sentenced him to eight years in prison, five of them in a labour camp.⁴⁵ While he was released seventeen months into his sentence, after being exchanged for his Soviet co-accused, Oleg Penkovsky,

was sentenced to death, and executed by firing squad days after the trial.⁴⁶ As far as journalism was concerned, relations between Moscow and London were improving. The overall political relationship, however, was so entirely different as to be one where wrongdoers were at risk of death. It is hardly surprising that the BBC decided against showing a programme that risked antagonizing the Kremlin just as their first permanent correspondent prepared to take up his post. The episode summarizes the media connections that were possible during the Cold War, and their nature: political considerations very often having to be considered alongside editorial ones. Nevertheless, there were those who tried their best to tell the story as they saw it. As Fainberg has persuasively pointed out of correspondents on both sides of the ideological confrontation, ‘however immersed they may have been in stereotypical views of the rival, they still made an effort to make the ‘other’ more familiar and looked for human elements on both sides of the divide.’⁴⁷ The BBC’s first correspondent was one such.

Once in the Soviet capital, de Mauny moved into an apartment building on the Sadovo-Samotechnaya section of Moscow’s pleasantly and deceptively named ‘Garden Ring’—actually a multi-lane motorway encircling the city centre. His work was able to satisfy some of the BBC audiences’ curiosity about everyday life in the Soviet Union. In August 1963, he reported for the *Woman’s Hour* programme on the number of Soviet women who did manual work, and the fact that this was not only a consequence of feminist ideology in a socialist society. It was, de Mauny reported, ‘a rather moving spectacle – a reminder that the last war robbed Russia of almost an entire generation of young men’.⁴⁸ De Mauny, as his obituary in *The Times* noted, was himself a veteran of the Second World War, having served in ‘the

Pacific, the Middle East and Italy.’⁴⁹ He must have felt the absence especially keenly. The conflict that had made allies of ideological foes was long finished, but the absence that de Mauny sensed on the streets of Moscow was a reminder that the Soviet and British people had once shared suffering in a common cause—and that connection endured even during the Cold War, with radio the medium through which it was expressed.

¹ Quentin Reynolds, *Only the Stars Are Neutral* (London: Cassells, 1942), p. 87.

² Reynolds, *Only the Stars Are Neutral*, p. 87.

³ Sheila Fitzpatrick, *On Stalin's Team: The Years of living dangerously in Soviet politics* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2015), p. 99.

⁴ David Reynolds and Vladimir Pechatnov, *The Kremlin Letters: Stalin's Wartime Correspondence with Churchill and Roosevelt* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2018), p. 13.

⁵ Reynolds and Pechatnov, *The Kremlin Letters*, p. 54.

⁶ Reynolds and Pechatnov, *The Kremlin Letters*, p. 52.

⁷ Philip Jordan, *Russian Glory* (London: The Cresset Press, 1942), 106.

⁸ Charlotte Haldane, *Russian Newsreel* (London: Penguin, 1943), 46.

⁹ Siân Nicholas, *The Echo of War, Home Front Propaganda and the Wartime BBC* (Manchester: University Press, 1996), p. 166.

¹⁰ Nicholas, *The Echo of War*, p. 171.

¹¹ 29 July 1941, R13/264, BBC Written Archives Centre.

¹² Nicholas, *The Echo of War*, 169.

¹³ 21 February 1944, R13/264, BBC WAC.

¹⁴ John Hohenberg, *Foreign Correspondence: The Great Reporters and their Times* (New York: Columbia UP, 1964), p. 400.

¹⁵ Robert Service, *A History of Modern Russia from Nicholas II to Putin* (London: Penguin, 2003), p. 304.

¹⁶ Harrison E. Salisbury, ‘Moscow Organ Mocks Statement by Truman That ‘Cold War’ May End in Soviet Yielding’, *New York Times*, 10 September 1949, p. 6.

¹⁷ Susan Carruthers, *The Media at War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 72.

¹⁸ 26 January 1948, R47/973/1, BBC WAC.

¹⁹ 26 January 1948, R47/973/1, BBC WAC.

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- ²⁰ James Rodgers, *Assignment Moscow: Reporting on Russia from Lenin to Putin* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2023), p. 119.
- ²¹ Notes on the BBC's concerns with the Soviet Union., Paper no. 1, E 1/2, 434/1, BBC WAC., p. 1.
- ²² E 1/2, 440/1, BBC WAC.
- ²³ Notes on the BBC's concerns with the Soviet Union., Paper no. 1, E 1/2, 434/1, BBC WAC., p. 2.
- ²⁴ Haldane, *Russian Newsreel* (London: Penguin, 1943), p. 46.
- ²⁵ Notes on the BBC's concerns with the Soviet Union., Paper no. 1 E 1/2, 434/1, BBC WAC, p. 2.
- ²⁶ Appendix to Paper no. 3, E 1/2, 434/1, BBC WAC.
- ²⁷ Appendix to Paper no. 3, E 1/2, 434/1, BBC WAC.
- ²⁸ 'Radio Moscow in English', Paper no. 4, E 1/2, 434/1, BBC WAC.
- ²⁹ Paper no. 4, E 1/2, 434/, BBC WAC.
- ³⁰ E 1/2, 440/1, BBC WAC.
- ³¹ Head of Talks (Kenneth Lamb/J.A. Camacho) to FE (Foreign Editor), 10 October 1961, R28/311, BBC WAC.
- ³² Internal Memo from the Foreign Editor, 19 September 1961, R28/311, BBC WAC.
- ³³ R28/418/1 – From Acting Foreign News Editor to Editor News and Current Affairs, 29 November 1962, BBC WAC.
- ³⁴ 'Donald S. Connery', *The Lakeville Journal*, 20 January 2021, accessed 20 October 2024, <https://lakevillejournal.com/obituaries/donald-s-connery>. <https://lakevillejournal.com/obituaries/donald-s-connery>.
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