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PREM 19/120







TOP SECRET PART 1.

Confidential File

Security of the Secret Services  
~~Sir~~ A. Blunt

Security

May 1979

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date
<del>8.5.79</del>							
<del>29.5.79</del>							
<del>19.6.79</del>							
<del>17.10.79</del>							
<del>8.11.79</del>							
<del>21.11.79</del>							
<del>23.11.79</del>							
<del>26.11.79</del>							
<del>3.2.79</del>							
<del>6.2.79</del>							
<del>6.12.79</del>							
<del>7.12.79</del>							
<del>11.12.79</del>							
<del>12.12.79</del>							
<del>13.12.79</del>							
23.11.79							
— ends —							

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PART 1 ends:-

Sir Philip Moore to Canavan MP

23. 11. 79

PART 2 begins:-

NJS to Ho 26. 11. 79



(Filed inside front cover)

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<u>Year</u>	<u>Public Knowledge</u>	<u>Confidential Information</u>
1935/36	Blunt recruited by Burgess	
1937	Blunt joins Warburg Institute	
1939	Blunt becomes Reader in History of Art, Univ. of London and Dep. Director, Courtauld Inst.	
1939(Sept)	Blunt Commissioned in Intelligence Corps.	
1940(July)	Blunt joins MI5	
1945(Oct)	Blunt leaves MI5 and rejoins Courtauld Institute	
1945	Blunt becomes Surveyor of The King's Pictures	
1947	Blunt becomes Professor of Art, Univ. of London and Director of Courtauld Institute	
1951(May)	Defection of Burgess and Maclean Security Service informed [Conf. by Goronwy Rees] that Burgess had said that Blunt had been a Soviet Agent in the 1930s.	
1952	Blunt becomes Surveyor of The Queen's Pictures	
1956	Blunt made KCVO	
1963(Jan)	Defection of Philby	
1963(Aug)	Death of Burgess	
1964(Feb)		Whitney Straight revealed to MI5 that he had been recruited for the TRIS by Blunt
(2 Mar)		Home Secretary informed of Straight revelation
(13 Apr)		Hollis informed Cunningham of intention to interrogate Blunt in following week
(15 Apr)		Acting DPP (Crump) informed Legal Secretary that he had given authority for offer of immunity at interview of Blunt to take place in following week
(16 Apr)		Attorney General acquiesced in Crump's action



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(16 Apr) Sir Charles Cunningham and Sir Roger Hollis saw Sir Michael Adeane

(23 Apr) Blunt confessed

(17 June) Hollis informed Home Secretary and Cunningham of Blunt's confession

1972 Blunt retired as Surveyor of The Queen's Pictures.  
Appointed Adviser for The Queen's Pictures and Drawings

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*Passage deleted and closed under FOI exemption, Wayland*

1974 Blunt retires from Univ. of London and Courtauld Institute *11 March 2014*

1978(Nov) Blunt resigns as Adviser for The Queen's Pictures and Drawings



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Blunt: Consultation with Ministers

1967	Prime Minister (Wilson) and Home Secretary (Jenkins) informed.
1968	Home Secretary (Callaghan) informed.
1971	Home Secretary (Maudling) informed.
1972	Attorney General (Rawlinson) consulted.
1973	Prime Minister (Heath) and Home Secretary (Carr) informed in detail against the likelihood of publicity in case of Blunt's death.
1974 (June)	Attorney General (Silkin) consulted.
1974 (July)	Prime Minister (Wilson), Lord Chancellor (Elwyn-Jones), Home Secretary (Jenkins) and Attorney General (Silkin) fully informed.
1977 (June)	Prime Minister (Callaghan) and Home Secretary (Rees) fully informed.
1979 (May)	Prime Minister (Thatcher) and Home Secretary (Whitelaw) fully informed.

In addition, all Home Secretaries from March 1964 to date have signed interception warrants.

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1. CLIVE <sup>KW</sup>  
The PM was  
interested in this

2. PA

MS

## BACKGROUND

Following the defection of Burgess and Maclean in 1951 extensive enquiries were made about Civil Servants known or suspected to have had Communist affiliations. As a result of these enquiries Civil Service Departments made administrative arrangements to transfer a number of suspects away from posts in which they had access to classified information (the numbers are not readily available). In a smaller number of cases individual appeals were heard under the "purge procedure". These appeals resulted in the transfers from access to classified information of twenty-seven Civil Servants being upheld; in a further ten cases the appellants resigned and three were dismissed from Government service. In the vast majority of these cases there was neither suspicion nor evidence of espionage.

2. Following Blunt's confession in 1964 it became apparent that our records of student Communism in the 1930s and 1940s were deficient and incomplete. It was therefore decided to mount a major retrospective investigation of student Communism in the period 1929 to 1945. From 1967 a special unit of the Security Service spent six years studying in depth the student Communist movement from 1929-1945 at the major universities (primarily Oxford and Cambridge but also London, Bristol, Liverpool, Leeds, Sheffield, Manchester, Southampton, Birmingham and the Scottish Universities). In the course of this study the records of some 8,000 individual cases were investigated. Over 400 people were interviewed, some several times. At the end of this lengthy investigation it was concluded that no major espionage lead relating to the pre-war period had been overlooked.

SECRET



12 DOWNING STREET,  
S.W.1.

*With*

*The Private Secretary's*

*Compliments*

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(Blunt  
file)  
ms



DENNING etc.

Thursday 21st March 1963

Reference was made during the Consolidated Fund Bill debate to rumours concerning a senior Member of the Government and Miss Christine Keeler and Miss Davies. (under the protection of Parliamentary Privilege)

Friday 22nd March 1963

Personal Statement at 11.00 am by Secretary of State for War (Rt Hon John Profumo) informing the House of his acquaintance with Miss Keeler "...Miss Keeler and I were on friendly terms. There was no impropriety whatsoever in my acquaintance-ship with Miss Keeler. ....I shall not hesitate to issue writs for slander if scandalous allegations are made or repeated outside the House."

Tuesday 4th June 1963

Mr Profumo saw the Government Chief Whip and the Prime Minister's Principal said that his previous protestations of innocence had been untrue and that he had in fact had an improper association with Miss Keeler. He immediately tendered his resignation and indicated his intention to apply for the Chiltern Hundreds.

Monday 17th June 1963

Supply Day(20th AD): Debate on a Motion for the Adjournment of the House on SECURITY, with special reference to Mr Profumo's Resignation.

3.33 pm to 9.59 pm      DIVISION      Ayes 252      Noes 321

21st June 1963

Judicial Inquiry into the implications of the events leading up to Mr Profumo's resignation

Appointed under the Chairmanship of Lord Denning

Report published on 26th September 1963

Debate in the House on Monday 16th December 1963 on a Motion to Adjourn

3.41 pm to 10.00 pm

VASSALL CASE

13th November 1962 Appointment of Inquiry (under the Tribunals of Inquiry Act 1921) CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH OFFENCES UNDER THE OFFICIAL SECRETS ACT WERE COMMITTED BY CHRISTOPHER JOHN VASSALL;

Debate on Motion to Appoint - 14th November 3.59 pm to 10.00 pm

Report published April 1963;

Debate in the House 7th May 1963 on a Motion to Take Note of the Report



28th February 1967

Appointment of Committee of Inquiry (by Privy Councillors) to inquiry into "D"  
Notice Matters.            Chairman Lord Radcliffe

Reported published 13th June 1967    Debated in the House on 22nd June 1967

4.18 pm to 10.00 pm.    Motion to approve the Report etc.



### DR. ERHARD (VISIT)

Q8. Mr. Stonehouse asked the Prime Minister if he will make a statement on his discussions with the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany.

**The Prime Minister:** I would refer the hon. Member to the Answer which I gave the hon. Member for Ashfield (Mr. Warbey) on 21st January.

**Mr. Stonehouse:** Is not the Prime Minister aware that it is unsatisfactory that his discussions with Dr. Erhard on Britain's resumption of negotiations to go into the Common Market should remain confidential in view of the public speculation? Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether this was discussed with Dr. Erhard and what assurances he gave?

**The Prime Minister:** No, Sir. Conversations with Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers of other countries are always confidential.

### SECURITY COMMISSION

**Mr. H. Wilson (by Private Notice)** asked the Prime Minister whether he is in a position to make a further statement about the machinery for dealing with inquiries on security?

**The Prime Minister (Sir Alec Douglas-Home):** I apologise to the House for the fact that this is a rather long statement, but it is important.

In the debate on 16th December I described in outline the Government's proposals for a Standing Security Commission and proposed further consultation with the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition.

The right hon. Gentleman and I have had further discussions about this and in the light of them the Government have decided to set up a Security Commission with the following terms of reference:

If so requested by the Prime Minister, to investigate and report upon the circumstances in which a breach of security is known to have occurred in the public service, and upon any related failure of departmental security arrangements or neglect of duty; and, in the light of any such investigation, to advise whether any change in security arrangements is necessary or desirable.

Mr. Justice Winn has agreed to serve as Chairman and the other members will be Lord Normanbrook and Sir Caspar John. The Cabinet Office would provide the Secretary of the Commission.

Before asking the Commission to investigate a particular case, the Prime Minister will consult with the Leader of the Opposition.

Under the terms of reference, the Commission could be called upon to act if there had been a breach of security even though there had been no conviction—perhaps because the individual had fled the country.

Normally, the Commission would sit in private and would examine the witnesses themselves.

Usually, it would be unnecessary for any of the witnesses to be legally represented. But it is impossible to foresee all the circumstances, and the Commission would be authorised to permit a witness to be accompanied by his legal adviser if satisfied that his interests required such protection.

Exceptionally, the Commission might find that they were unable to make progress without powers to compel evidence. In such a case, Parliament would be asked to pass the necessary Resolutions under the Tribunals of Inquiry (Evidence) Act, 1921, to vest the Commission with the powers of that Act for that particular inquiry. The Commission would then proceed in all respects as a Tribunal of Inquiry.

The decision whether to sit in private or in public would be governed by the relevant statutory provision, and the normal procedure for having the case presented by counsel and for allowing legal representation would apply. When legal representation was allowed the Commission would be asked to advise whether an *ex gratia* contribution to the cost of such representation should be made from public funds.

In the ordinary case the Commission would report direct to the Prime Minister. When the Commission had been constituted a Tribunal of Inquiry, the report would formally be submitted to the Home Secretary, as required by the 1921 Act. But in either case the Leader of the Opposition would be consulted by



the Prime Minister when the report was received. The report would be made public to the extent that this was consistent with security considerations.

**Mr. Wilson:** Is the Prime Minister aware that although his answer was a little long, it was undoubtedly for the convenience of the House that he should give a full statement on what has been discussed between us?

I have only one supplementary question. Since the right hon. Gentleman has referred, in circumstances with which I fully agree—and I agree with the whole statement—to the possibility that where further action is necessary to compel witnesses to come forward and to speak the truth it will be necessary to clothe the Commission with the powers of the 1921 Act, will he bear in mind—I have given him notice of this supplementary question—that there is grave concern on both sides of the House about the working of the 1921 Act?

Will the Prime Minister therefore consider the proposal, which we have put forward on a number of occasions, that there should be a Select Committee of the House to review the working of the 1921 Act?

**The Prime Minister:** Yes, Sir. I believe that there is a lot of anxiety and concern. I do not think that the debate in another place produced any new proposal, but nevertheless these matters should be considered; and I will certainly consider them. I should not like to give a firm undertaking today, but I will consider what the right hon. Gentleman has said.

**Mr. Cole:** Would not my right hon. Friend think that in the terms of reference the words

“a breach of security is believed to have occurred”

rather than “is known to have occurred” would cover a wider compass and would seem to be justified by the remainder of his statement?

**The Prime Minister:** I should like to look further at the statement and at what my hon. Friend has said, but I think that the wording covers every possibility.

**Mr. Grimond:** Can the Prime Minister make clear what will be the position of the House, the Press and the broadcast-

Vol. 687

ing authorities when a case is referred to the Commission? It will, presumably, be impossible to discuss it in the House or to ask Questions about it. Will it also be impossible for any comment to be made either on the air or through the Press?

**The Prime Minister:** I do not see why the statement which I have made should set any limitation on discussion in this House. I should, however, like to consider the point made by the right hon. Gentleman and give him a considered reply, although I do not see *prima facie* any reason why the statement imposes a limitation.

**Mr. H. Wilson:** I agree with what the Prime Minister has said. Is it not clear that a reference to the Commission, which will not be a judicial tribunal until it is clothed with powers given by this House, would have no effect on the freedom of this House, the Press or broadcasting authorities or anyone else? Could it not be made clear that this body is an administrative Commission and not a judicial tribunal?

Will the Prime Minister, however, consider the point, which bears on the question raised by the right hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland (Mr. Grimond)—it is a point which I have raised with the right hon. Gentleman—that it should be understood that whenever a reference is made to the Commission there will be an announcement of the fact even if it refers to a case which has not become public through prosecution or court proceedings?

**The Prime Minister:** Yes, Sir; there should be an announcement. There is nothing in what I have said today to curtail the rights of Parliament and the Press.

**Mr. Bellenger:** The Prime Minister will be aware of the circumstances of the Vassall case. If matters arise which are not entirely security matters which would be kept secret, will the House have access to any comments or reports by the Commission and be in a position to discuss them, if necessary?

**The Prime Minister:** I would rather that hon. Members read the statement which I have made. On another day we will return to any questions that may interest them. I should not like to

X 3



[THE PRIME MINISTER.]  
pursue the matter with supplementary questions just at this moment.

**Mr. Hale :** What would happen if the Commission came to a conclusion at some stage of its inquiry that a criminal offence had been committed? Would it proceed to report or would it refer to the Director of Public Prosecutions the papers, including the voluntary evidence, or what will happen in these circumstances?

**The Prime Minister :** Again, I should like to consider the question and return to it later.

**Mr. Wigg :** In his further consideration of this excellent proposal, will the Prime Minister consider the advisability of drawing upon the experience of the board of inquiry set up under the Army and Naval Discipline Acts and give to the Commission in discharging its administrative functions power to take evidence on oath? This is quite apart from any powers for which the Commission might ask under the Tribunals of Inquiry (Evidence) Act.

*The Prime Minister indicated assent.*

#### MALAYSIA AND INDONESIA

**Mr. Brockway (by Private Notice)** asked the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations whether he will make a statement on the present negotiations between Malaysia and Indonesia for a cease-fire on the frontiers of Sarawak and Sabah and when British troops are expected to be withdrawn.

**The Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations and Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Duncan Sandys) :** Through the mediation of Mr. Kennedy, the Presidents of Indonesia and the Philippines and the Prime Minister of Malaysia have agreed to hold a meeting to improve relations between their countries. This meeting will be preceded by a meeting at Foreign Minister level. In addition, there is to be a prior meeting between the Prime Minister of Malaysia and the President of the Philippines.

As a preliminary to these meetings, President Sukarno has issued a cease-fire order to all his forces. However, the

Indonesian Government have explained that it will take about a week for this order to reach those forces which are at present operating across the border in Malaysia.

Since the expression "cease-fire" has been used, it should be emphasised that the Malaysian and British forces have been engaged in a purely defensive rôle and have fired only to repel invaders. Therefore, in present circumstances the question of the withdrawal of British troops does not arise.

Her Majesty's Government warmly welcome the steps which have been announced and they trust that these will lead to the restoration of normal relations between Malaysia and her two neighbours.

**Mr. Brockway :** Is the right hon. Gentleman aware of the degree to which the House will welcome this announcement and of our appreciation of the great services which Mr. Robert Kennedy has carried out in arranging this preliminary settlement? Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether the Government will give the fullest support to the proposals, made by the three Ministers concerned, that the Manila conference should be resumed so that there may be a consideration of the development of a wider confederation for all these areas?

**Mr. Sandys :** I have said that we welcome the announcement that there is to be a meeting between the three heads of Government. I think that we must see how they get on.

**Mr. B. Harrison :** Will my right hon. Friend try to impress on Mr. Kennedy when he is here the need for a guarantee by the American Government of any agreement that is made that full support must be given by the American Government to Malaysia and that we will not have any apparent equivocation by the American Government backing up other countries in the area?

**Mr. Sandys :** I do not want to anticipate the talks that we are to have with Mr. Kennedy.

**Mr. H. Wilson :** Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that we all welcome the announcement that has been made? Is he further aware that we welcome the fact that he has made it clear—as some announcements have not made it





CABINET OFFICE

With the compliments of  
Sir Robert Armstrong KCB, CVO  
*Secretary of the Cabinet*

C. A. Whitmore, Esq

70 Whitehall, London SW1A 2AS  
Telephone: 01-233 8319



Sir Anthony Blunt

Answers to Supplementary Questions listed in  
The Times of 16th November 1979

\*\* Q. 1 What was the nature of the new information that provoked Blunt's confession?

A. This cannot be disclosed.

\*\*\* Q. 2 What kind of material did Blunt pass to the Russians as a member of the Security Service from 1940 to 1945?

A. The information to which Blunt had access in the course of his duties in the Security Service was not such as would, if disclosed to the Russians, have been likely to prejudice British military interests or to have put British lives at risk.

\* Q. 3 Why did the Government of the day not tell Buckingham Palace about their suspicions and interrogations between 1951 and 1964?

A. I cannot answer for previous Administrations. Knowledge of these suspicions was in fact confined to a very few people in the security authorities; wider dissemination could presumably have put at risk their investigations. As the Prime Minister's statement made clear, Blunt had no access to classified information and was not a security risk after 1945. It is in any case questionable whether it would have been right to disseminate or act upon suspicions which could not be proved and had been strenuously denied.

X Q. 4 How did Blunt help Russian intelligence to get Burgess and Maclean out of Britain?

A. There is nothing to add to paragraph 6 of the Prime Minister's statement. It was a warning from Philby that tipped off Burgess and Maclean, and Blunt was used simply as a contact in making arrangements.

⊗ Q. 5 What did Blunt do for the Russians between 1945 and 1951?

A. During this period Blunt had no access to classified information. We have no reason to disbelieve his statement that there was no activity during that period.

Q. 6 Who did Blunt implicate while helping the Security Service with their inquiries?

A. Though (as the Prime Minister's statement said) Blunt gave useful information, there was nothing which could be used as evidence for the purposes of bringing charges.



⊗ ⊗

Q. 7. How did this case differ from the case of George Blake, where the evidence against him was based on his confession?

A. Blake's confession was not induced by an offer of immunity from prosecution. There was not thought anything to be gained by such an offer in that case.

cc Mr. Whitmore, No. 10  
Mr. Chilcott, Home Office  
Sir Brian Cubbon, Home Office  
Mr. Beckett, Law Officers' Dept.



DEPARTMENT/SERIES ..... <i>PREM 19</i> ..... PIECE/ITEM ..... <i>120</i> ..... (one piece/item number)	Date and sign
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9

23rd November, 1979.

I am commanded by The Queen to thank you for your letter of 22nd November, 1979. The Attorney-General explained in the House of Commons on Wednesday 21st November (Hansard Column 516) the position in relation to communications between Her Majesty and her Private Secretary, and there is nothing which I can add to that statement.

SIR PHILIP MOORE

Dennis Canavan, Esq., MP.



Security

MS  
23/XI

## Parliament by ANDREW ALEXANDER



THE AFTERMATH of the Commons debate on the Blunt affair turned out to be a tense and bad-tempered ten minutes in the House yesterday when it looked as if Mr Speaker Thomas and certain Labour Left Wingers were in for a showdown.

The row, however, was not about spies but parliamentary procedure.

The easy way to explain or skate round it would be simply to say that there was a procedural muddle on Wednesday night and that Labour back-benchers who wanted a vote on the Government's handling of the Blunt affair were ignored by the Speaker.

However, for those who would like to know the fuller, unabridged, ever-so-slightly technical version, here goes:

The debate on the Blunt affair took place, for procedural reasons on a Government motion to adjourn the House. (But it did not actually want to adjourn the House, you must understand).

To the alarm of some Labour back-benchers, the Government minister winding up the debate had shown no inclination to sit down as the clock crept towards 10 o'clock which is the hour when motions turn into, so to speak, procedural pumpkins and automatically fail.

So Mr Willie Hamilton, Labour MP for Central Fife, had jumped up at 9.59½ p.m. and moved 'that the question be now put'.

### Embarrassed

The Speaker duly put the question (that the question be now put); and when the question was agreed to without dissent, proceeded to the main question (that the House do now adjourn). Are you with me? The Speaker proceeded to the usual formula: 'As many as are of that opinion say Aye'. The Labour back-benchers looked suddenly bewildered. It was a Government motion, so presumably you shouted Aye to oppose the Government. On the other hand, perhaps the Government did not actually want to pass its own motion since there was still another small debate to come.

So the Speaker's query was greeted from the Labour back benches with a mixture of 'Aye', 'No' and even 'Search me'. Since the Government side seemed to be in a state of almost equal confusion, the Speaker said he would start all over again.

'As many as are of that opinion say "Aye";' he intoned. 'Aye' shouted some Labour MPs, now catching up.

To the contrary, "No" went on the Speaker. 'No' came the Government roar.

'I think the Noes have it,' called out the Speaker.

'Aye' shouted some Labour voices meaning No, the Noes did not have it. (Are you still with me?)

Now at this point the Speaker should have called a division, because some Labour MPs were still dissenting (that is they were shouting 'Aye,' even though Government MPs were loudly assenting, i.e., crying 'No' if you see what I mean). But he did not call a division. He declared the motion to adjourn defeated and went on to next business.

It was this which Mr Hamilton raised in the Commons yesterday. The Speaker was clearly embarrassed by what had happened.

However, he had to tell MPs that the moment to raise any complaint was at the moment of dispute, not now. Besides, he had listened to a tape and the 'Ayes' were only just audible.

And he had been in the Chair for three minutes after the end of the main debate before handing over to the Deputy Speaker.

Mr Hamilton, however, to say nothing of Mr Skinner, Labour MP for Bolsover, had also got hold of the Westminster tapes and both were satisfied that their voices were audible. As indeed they were.

### Inflammable

Mr Skinner, saturnine and suspicious, rose to address the Chair.

He referred to the fact that the Speaker had 'disappeared' before MPs could approach him. It was not a particularly provocative remark by Mr Skinner's standards but the Speaker was in an inflammable mood.

There was a limit to what he was going to put up with from the honourable gentlemen, he barked (loud Tory cheers). He had had to endure much over the years from that quarter, he went on.

Mr Skinner glared back. Some MPs held their breath. Was the long-rumoured show-down or shoot-out between Sheriff Thomas and the notorious Skinner gang about to take place?

Mr Skinner slowly rose to his feet again. But he was coming peacefully—well fairly.

He had listened to those tapes and thought the dissenting voices audible. Perhaps the Speaker had attached little significance to them, he added cryptically, because there was such a massive consensus between the two Front Benches?

It looked as if the row was over. But then the wild and woolly Mr Canavan, Labour MP for West Stirlingshire, demanded also to be heard on the same Point of Order.

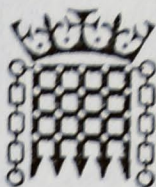
The matter was closed, the Speaker told him curtly. 'No vote, now no Point of Order,' raged Mr Canavan and marched straight out of the Chamber.

The Speaker, after a moment's deliberation, announced coldly that if another MP walked out on him that way, he would 'name him', i.e., suspend him.

Tory MPs responded with another warm and sympathetic cheer. A good dose of Willie Whitelaw's 'glass-house' treatment—that was what these fellows needed.



FROM DENNIS CANAVAN MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

9

22 November 1979

HM The Queen  
Buckingham Palace  
London

Your Majesty

As you can see from the enclosed extracts from the official Parliamentary Report, I and several other members of the House of Commons have tried in vain to obtain a simple unequivocal answer to a question which we have put to several Ministers and ex-Ministers, including the Prime Minister herself, namely whether you were informed in 1964 of Mr Anthony Blunt's confession.

I am sure that you appreciate the great public concern about the fact that a self-confessed traitor not only continued to be a senior member of the Royal household but actually received another Royal appointment in 1972.

In Parliament, it has been stated that the Home Secretary at the time was informed and successive Prime Ministers and Home Secretaries since 1967 were informed. It has also been stated that your Private Secretary was informed and that "The Palace" was informed.

I would be most grateful if you would clarify this matter by letting the public know whether you personally were informed and, if so, when you were informed.

Yours faithfully

*Dennis Canavan*

Dennis Canavan MP



28 NOV 1979

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## Published Papers

The following published paper enclosed on this file has been removed and destroyed. Copies may be found elsewhere in The National Archives.

House of Commons Hansard, 21 November 1979,  
Columns 402-520 "Mr Anthony Blunt"

Signed Wayland Date 11 March 2014

**PREM Records Team**



mb

Prime Minister.

A very nice letter.

Full

22xi

Fountain Court, Temple, London EC4 9DH.  
01-353-7356

22 Nov 1979  
R23

Private Sec to PM

Dear Sir,

My father rang me up at about 7.30 last night and told me, among other things, that he had been very touched by the Prime Minister's remarks about him in the Commons yesterday.

I thought that the Prime Minister would like to know this. As a family we have been very anxious for him over the last fortnight - while knowing that it would be ludicrous to think of him involving himself in anything shabby - and we are all very grateful to the Prime Minister for putting his part in the affair so clearly and sympathetically on the public record.

Yours sincerely

Henry Brooke



<p>DEPARTMENT/SERIES          ..... <i>PREM 19</i> .....</p> <p>PIECE/ITEM ..... <i>120</i> .....          (one piece/item number)</p>	<p>Date and sign</p>
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MR. WHITMORE

Sir Geoffrey Harrison

Sir Geoffrey Harrison was the target of a KGB compromise operation in Moscow in 1968 which he himself reported immediately on coming under pressure. He was thereupon withdrawn from Moscow and interviewed by the Security Authorities. There was no evidence that there was any loss of classified information.

Duty Clerk

21 11 79



SECRET

Security Debate  
Briefing 21-11-79.

PA

(out)

Sir Frederick Warner: "The Fifth Man"

4  
9A

Line to Take

We have absolutely no reason to believe that there is any truth in the allegations about Sir Frederick Warner.

Background Note

Joined the Foreign Service 1946.

1948, Private Secretary to Hector McNeil, Minister of State, Foreign Office.

Burgess was his assistant in the Private Office and became a close friend. After Burgess defected this was referred to in the press and there was a clear suggestion that this implied treasonable association. The Security Service investigated the case but found no evidence to support this. Because he was a close friend of Burgess it was also suggested that he was a homosexual. At interview in the Foreign Office he categorically denied that he had ever engaged in homosexual practices. He married in 1971 and has a young family.

SECRET



BRIEF FOR PRIME MINISTERCASE OF SIR GEOFFREY HARRISONProblem

1. Two journalists from the Daily Mirror have information that Sir Geoffrey Harrison was prematurely withdrawn as HM Ambassador Moscow in 1968 as a result of a KGB compromise. Sir Geoffrey has admitted the accuracy of this story to the journalists. The Editor of the Daily Mirror has decided not to publish but the story may well come out.

*Passage deleted and retained under Section 3(4).  
Wayland, 11 March 2014*

Line to Take

2. A Line to Take is attached.

Background

3. On 22 August 1968 Sir Geoffrey Harrison, HM Ambassador Moscow, was withdrawn a few days before he was due to leave on retirement. He had reported that KGB pressure had been put on him to provide information as a result of his affair with a Russian maid in his personal household.

4. He was formally reprimanded.

5. He was interviewed three times by the Security Service.

It was finally concluded that he had given a true and complete account of the affair and that there had been no loss of

/classified





classified information of any substance, though he might have revealed personality information about some British Embassy staff.

Ministerial Involvement

6. The Foreign Secretary (Mr Michael Stewart) and the Prime Minister were immediately informed (and were kept informed). When the investigations had been completed the American Secretary of State (Mr Rusk) and the Director of the CIA (Mr Helms) were informed.

Involvement of the Palace

7. Sir Geoffrey had been awarded the GCMG in the Birthday Honours 1968. Sir M Adeane was informed and arrangements made whereby the Insignia was delivered to Sir Geoffrey at home and he did not attend a ceremony at the Palace, nor did he have the customary farewell interview with The Queen.



SECRET



PA

MS

THE CASE OF SIR GEOFFREY HARRISON

Line to Take

Sir Geoffrey Harrison was the target of a KGB compromise operation in Moscow in 1968 which he himself reported immediately on coming under pressure. He was thereupon withdrawn from Moscow and interviewed by the Security authorities. There was no evidence that there was any loss of classified information.

SECRET



Private Security

He spoke. I will speak  
just to the S/S tomorrow.  
But you may show  
him this week's info.  
We are also informing  
Mr Alexander (No 20)



PUS

SECRET

Michael J. Salter  
20/11

c.c. Chief Clerk

SIR G HARRISON (Miss Waghorn's minute of 19 November)

— see minute below

1. As agreed, I telephoned Mr Dalton and advised that he should decline to allow himself to be drawn further and to suggest to Mr Penrose that he direct any further enquiries to the Office. In this context, he could make suitable reference to the Diplomatic Service Regulations (No 14) which requires officers and retired officers to seek authority in respect of disclosing official information or using official experience. Mr Dalton accepted the advice. I also said that we had it in mind to let Sir Geoffrey know of Mr Penrose's approach. Mr Dalton agreed that this would be right.
2. I then telephoned Sir Geoffrey (352 9488) who said that he was in the process of writing a letter to the PUS which he plans to deliver to the Office tomorrow morning. The letter would report that two journalists named Penrose had tackled him this morning (one for the Daily Mirror and the other a freelance working under Mirror auspices). They had told him that they had very detailed information about the circumstances of his return from Moscow in August 1968. One of them had mentioned Joe Haines in this connection. They said that they had also been in touch with the former Foreign Secretary, Michael Stewart, and with a senior diplomat who had both confirmed that there had been an "incident". Sir Geoffrey decided that his best course in the circumstances would be to speak to the journalists off the record, broadly confirming the matter, with a view to ensuring that the story was not over-exaggerated. He had subsequently heard from the Penrose employed by the Daily Mirror that the editor had decided not to publish.
3. Sir Geoffrey said that he would be reached at home (352 9488) until 7.15 this evening, or after about 11 p.m. He could also be reached at the same number tomorrow prior to about 10.30 a.m and after 4 p.m. (He did not say this in a way which suggested that he would want or expect a further telephone call, but for information, when I indicated that I would try and let the PUS know this evening of our conversation.)

*J. Salter*

I S Winchester  
Security Department  
M 408 273 5627

20 November 1979



SECRET



Mr Winchester,  
Security Department

1. Mr Peter Dalton has just telephoned. He is a retired diplomat, his last post was Moscow in 1968/69. He was Chargé d'Affaires on 28 August 1968 at the time of the Czechoslovak crisis.
2. Mr Dalton has been approached by a Mr Penrose who said he was concerned with reporting on Czechoslovakia in 1968 and is working on an article connected with that time. He would like to talk to Mr Dalton since he understood Mr Dalton had been present in Moscow when Sir G Harrison was peremptorily recalled to London. Mr Penrose wanted to know the reason for this recall and referred to stories about an "affair with a chambermaid". Mr Dalton stalled and made no comment. Mr Penrose pressed him to say Sir G Harrison had been prematurely recalled and Mr Dalton denied this.
3. However Mr Penrose has asked for a personal interview with Mr Dalton and said he would notify News Department and get in touch with him again. Mr Dalton in turn said he would notify the FCO of this enquiry.
4. Mr Dalton would be grateful for some instructions as to how to handle this enquiry. His telephone number is Mayfield (04355) 3421.

*Sheila M Waghorn*

Sheila M Waghorn  
APS/PUS

19 November 1979



SECRET & PERSONAL

P17 68/79

PRIME MINISTER

Sir Geoffrey Harrison

A telegram was received last night from Sir Geoffrey Harrison in Moscow to say that owing to an indiscretion he has come under K.G.B. pressure. He reports as follows:

"This morning K.G.B. agent disclosed herself as such. She then asked me for the details of personnel and organisation of this Embassy's counter-intelligence system claiming to have compromising photographs which she would hand over to me if I complied with her request. I refused point blank. She then said that she would have to hand over the matter to her superior".

2. Sir Geoffrey Harrison was due to leave Moscow on retirement by car on 28 August. He realised that we might want him to stay on during the present crisis but in the circumstances he is quite clear that he must return to the United Kingdom at once. The earliest flight will be on Sunday, 25 August, arriving in the early evening. I have agreed that he should do this and he will report on arrival all the circumstances to Sir Denis Greenhill.

3. As you will recall, we discussed the possibility of recalling him for consultations. I have therefore instructed him to say in answer to questions in Moscow that he is returning by air in advance of his planned date in order to consult with me before the Debate on Czechoslovakia on

/Monday

SECRET & PERSONAL

Sir D Greenhill

Seen by me P.M.

MU.



SECRET & PERSONAL

Monday next. Foreign Office News Department will, of course, confirm this when they are tackled.

4. I have informed the Director-General of the Security Services and "C" of what has occurred and their people will be available as appropriate.

5. In the circumstances of the present Czech crisis, I think it would be a mistake for the Embassy in Moscow to remain in charge of the Minister for any length of time. I therefore propose to accelerate the departure of Sir Duncan Wilson who prior to the crisis had planned to leave at the beginning of October.

22 August, 1968

Copies to: 'C'  
Sir M. Funnival Jones  
Sir Colin Crowe  
Sir Denis Greenidge

2 Copies destroyed  
BML  
3/5



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01-405 7641 Ext. 3291

Communications on this subject should  
be passed to  
THE LEGAL SECRETARY  
ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CHAMBERS

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CHAMBERS,  
LAW OFFICERS' DEPARTMENT,  
ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE,  
LONDON, W.C.2.

20 November 1979

Martin Vile Esq  
Cabinet Office  
Whitehall  
LONDON S W 1

*Don Wain,*

*W  
20*

BLUNT DEBATE

I attach a draft of the opening part of the Attorney General's winding up speech for today's Debate in which he deals with the question of immunity.

I am copying this letter to Clive Whitmore at No 10, John Chilcot (Home Office) and Bernard Sheldon.

*W C Beckett*

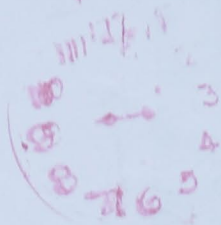
W C BECKETT

CONFIDENTIAL



21 NOV 1979

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Mr Speaker, before attempting to deal with, as fully as I can, the main points made in this Debate, first, as my Rt Hon Friend the Prime Minister foreshadowed, I should like to deal with the question of immunity - a matter at the heart of this affair.

An immunity is a promise that a man will not be prosecuted. It is given when the public interest in obtaining the man's co-operation is judged sufficient to forego the opportunity of prosecuting him. It may, and this is more usually the case these days, for example in connection with evidence given by witnesses at public enquiries, be a more limited affair - that is to say limited to saying that a man's confession would not be used against him but leaving open the question of his prosecution based on admissible evidence from sources other than the confession. In that kind of case any confession given becomes unusable as a matter of law because no statement is admissible unless it is voluntary, and it is not voluntary if there has been a promise or inducement. In the case of Mr Blunt the immunity was not so limited because one was dealing with a situation in which there was no admissible evidence against him and little prospect of ever obtaining any. His denials had been firm over a number of years. What was given to him, therefore, was not merely a promise that his confession would not be used as evidence against him but that in return for his co-operation and his giving information useful to the Security

/Services

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Services he was given a promise that he would never be prosecuted.

I have examined the record of what in fact was done at the time of the interview which produced his confession in April 1964 and I should like to ~~let~~<sup>let</sup> the House <sup>know</sup> how it was recorded. When confronted with the information which had led the Security Services to suspect him Blunt described it as "pure phantasy". The interview then went on like this -

"There was a long pause and I then reverted to my opening theme. I asked him if it was really loyalty to friends which deterred him from speaking or was it fear. I said that if it was fear I could give him an absolute assurance that no action would be taken against him if he now told the truth. Would he now get the whole thing off his chest. Blunt's answer was - 'Give me 5 minutes while I wrestle with my conscience'."

Blunt then made his admissions and both at that time and subsequently he co-operated in the enquiries of the Security authorities. That is how the immunity was actually given and how Blunt responded.

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In case the House is troubled about the extent to which immunities may be given, let me say a word about who may give them. They may be given by the Director of Public Prosecutions, who, I should remind the House, carries out his duties under the superintendence of the Attorney General, or immunities may be given directly by the Attorney General or on his authority. In serious cases they would not be given by the Director without reference to his Attorney General and the authority for the giving of immunity to Blunt in 1964 was given on the authority of my predecessor, Sir John Hobson, after the matter had been referred to him by the then Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions. There is no specific statutory legal authority for the giving of immunities but what is meant by immunity is the promise not to prosecute and that promise can be effectively honoured by the Director and the Attorney General. Some offences may only be proceeded with by the consent of the Attorney General and offences under the Official Secrets Acts fall within that category, other statutes require a prior consent by the Director of Public Prosecutions. The Director has a power to take over cases and offer no evidence and ultimately, perhaps the most important power, the Attorney General may enter a nolle prosequi which, without challenge in the courts, may effectively stop any prosecution on indictment.

A decision of an Attorney General to authorise the granting of an immunity such as that granted in the Blunt case

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is a decision, like many others in the field of law enforcement, which an Attorney General takes without prior approval of his ministerial colleagues. The constitutional position here is clear. Whilst an Attorney General may seek from his ministerial colleagues information from them which may be relevant to the public interest affecting his decision, the decision is his alone. The question of informing his ministerial colleagues about such decisions is another matter but as already made clear, my predecessor, Sir John Hobson, when taking his decision was told that the matter had already been brought to the attention of the then Home Secretary.

My position in this matter as Attorney General today and that of my immediate predecessors the Attorney General in 1972, now Lord Rawlinson, and the Attorney General in 1974, the Right Honourable and Learned Member for Dulwich, [as he himself has made clear earlier in this Debate] has been to agree that Blunt's confession, obtained as a result of the inducement, would be inadmissible in criminal proceedings and to agree that Blunt could never now be prosecuted in respect of the matters about which he confessed even if there were to exist evidence to sustain a prosecution apart from the confession. In the event, no such other evidence has ever existed but the position of successive Attorneys-General must be that they must honour the undertakings given by or on the authority of their predecessors. In saying that I am not to be taken as implying that I would have taken a different decision than my predecessor, Sir John Hobson. Of course, it

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is not now a decision for me to take. But it was taken at the time on the basis of material properly put to him and on which he was in a position to balance the public interest in favour of the grant of immunity.

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*It is ruinous,  
m*



2  
PRIME MINISTER

To see this Questions briefing.  
We will follow it up with the  
Home Secretary. *MS*

MR ANTHONY BLUNT - HOME AFFAIRS SELECT COMMITTEE

1. The House of Commons agreed on 25 June 1979 to the establishment of a Select Committee on Home Affairs "to examine the expenditure, administration and policy" of the Home Office and associated public bodies. The Committee was empowered to appoint one sub-committee. Proposals for a number of other departmental select committees were agreed at the same time.
2. These select committees cannot begin their work until their membership has been agreed by the House. Motions proposing the membership of the Home Affairs Committee and other departmental committees came before the House at 4 pm on Friday, 16 November. To be passed they needed to be unopposed, but Mr Farr (Conservative, Harborough) objected to all, including the Home Affairs Committee, despite a request from Mr English (Labour, Nottingham W) to let the Home Affairs Motion go through. Mr English referred (OR, 16 November, 1979, column 1748-9) to the possibility of the select committee being thus prevented from considering the case of Mr Anthony Blunt. As it now seems unlikely that these membership motions will go through unopposed, it will be necessary for Government time to be provided in order to allow the House to reach conclusions, and to get the committees into operation. No decision has yet been taken as to when the Motions shall be brought forward again.
3. The interpretation of the terms of reference of a select committee is a matter, in the first instance, for the select committee itself. If, therefore, the Home Affairs Select Committee, when established, wished to enquire into the Blunt affair, it would be for the Committee to consider whether their present terms of reference "to examine the expenditure, administration and policy" of the Home Office and associated public bodies enabled them to do so. Alternatively, the House might refer the matter to the Committee, extending the Committee's terms of reference if this were thought necessary. The powers of the Home Affairs Select Committee include the normal select committee powers to send for persons, papers and records. It would be procedurally possible for additional powers to be granted to the select committee by the House.





4. Q. Would it be possible for the Departmental Select Committee on Home Affairs to consider the case of Anthony Blunt?

A. As the House is aware, it was not possible, as we had hoped, to get this and other Departmental committees fully established last Friday. When the Home Affairs Committee is able to begin its work it will be for the Committee itself, within its terms of reference, to decide its subjects of enquiry.

Q. When will Motions dealing with the membership of these select committees be brought before the House again?

A. As soon as possible, but no precise time has yet been allocated. Obviously we want to get these committees established and working as soon as we can.



DEPARTMENT/SERIES ..... <i>PREM 19</i> ..... PIECE/ITEM ..... <i>120</i> ..... (one piece/item number)	Date and sign
Extract/Item details:  <i>Minute (A0708) from Armstrong          to Whitmore dated 20 November 1979</i>	
CLOSED FOR ..... <i>52</i> ..... YEARS UNDER FOI EXEMPTION	<i>11 March 2014          CWayland</i>
RETAINED UNDER SECTION 3(4) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT 1958	
TEMPORARILY RETAINED	
MISSING AT TRANSFER	
MISSING	
NUMBER NOT USED	





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Ref. A0707

MR. WHITMORE

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Seen by US P.M.

JWH

2081

Blunt

Sir Harold Wilson asked to come to see me this afternoon. He came to the Cabinet Office.

2. I had written to him to tell him that, though he was not told about Blunt when he was Leader of the Opposition in the spring and summer of 1964, he was told about him as Prime Minister in October 1967 and again in June 1974.

Sir Harold Wilson claimed to have forgotten that he was told about Blunt on these two occasions, and asked to see the papers which he had seen at the time. This was a perfectly proper request for a former Prime Minister to make, and I accordingly showed him the papers.

3. We had a rather desultory discussion, which ranged round the political circumstances which prevailed at the time when this was first referred to him by Mr. Roy Jenkins in October 1967 (a month before devaluation) and about the fact that The Queen had not been told until 1973 (a fact which was included in the papers submitted to him as Prime Minister in 1974). I thought it right to tell him that The Queen's Private Secretary had been told in 1964 and that what passed between The Queen and her Private Secretary was absolutely confidential, as was that which passed between The Queen and her Prime Ministers. I also reminded him that The Queen's Private Secretary had seen the Permanent Secretary at the Home Office and the Director General of the Security Service in April 1964 and had been told that, if as a result of the offer of immunity Blunt confessed, it would not be desirable to remove him from the Royal Household or strip him of his honour, since that would go far to nullify the value of his co-operation by alerting his former masters and other potential suspects to the fact that he had confessed (or been discovered) and might be talking.

4. Sir Harold Wilson asked whether he had been invited to take a decision on either occasion. I said that, as he would see from the papers, in both cases the case had been put to him as a matter of information; on the second occasion,





in 1974, he had been invited to approve the contingency planning undertaken in case of need to make a statement - e.g. in the event of Blunt's death - and he had given that approval.

RAA

(Robert Armstrong)

20th November, 1979



107. B.  
INTERVIEW WITH ANTHONY BLUNT BY CHRISTOPHER MORRIS

- 1300, 20 November

Morris: Professor Blunt, you say in your statement that it was a case of political conscience against loyalty to country. You chose conscience. Do you now regret having made that decision?

Blunt: Very much. The time seemed right, but looking back at it now I realise it was disastrous and an appalling mistake and also I ought to have realised at the time that I didn't understand enough about politics really to take a decision of this kind.

Morris: You claim that Guy Burgess recruited you as a Russian spy. Wasn't it the other way round?

Blunt: No.

Morris: Who was the spymaster then in Cambridge at that time?

Blunt: No-one.

Morris: So how did this spy ring get off the ground?

Blunt: Well, they were not recruited in Cambridge. I doubt if I can say more than that, but that is absolutely certain.

Morris: There was a spymaster, though - Samuel Cahen - who was operating in Britain at the time. Did you have any contact with him?

Blunt: I had never heard the name until I read it in Boyle's book.

Morris: You were obviously a fairly influential figure as a Don at Cambridge. How many other spies did you recruit after Burgess recruited you?

Blunt: That is a question that I cannot answer, I am afraid.

Morris: Why not?

Blunt: Because of the Official Secrets Act.

Morris: Are there other spies to your knowledge then still in



existence from that spy ring?

Blunt: I think there must have been.

Morris: How many?

Blunt: I don't know.

Morris: Guy Burgess was a known homosexual. You too have, I understand, homosexual leanings. Was there an affair between you and Guy Burgess?

Blunt: No. Absolutely not.

Morris: So what was the leverage, then, that made you join as a Russian spy? Was it not homosexuality?

Blunt: No. In no sense. It was simply that he persuaded me - I say he - and there was the whole atmosphere at that time based on the anti-Fascist feeling. There was very strong pressure towards the Left, and I think we all - and then of course there was the Spanish Civil War which made it more intense - we all felt it was our duty to do what we could against Fascism and it was put to me by Guy that it was my duty to do this. I now realise that that was totally wrong. But it had nothing to do with homosexuality and it was, as I say, a matter of belief.

Morris: You stand now exposed as a spy, a traitor to your country. What other regrets apart from your words at the beginning of this interview have you to say now to the people of Britain who must still abhor what you did?

Blunt: I can only say that I acted according to my conscience and I bitterly regret what I did.

Morris: No more than that? You would hope to resume a normal life now?

Blunt: I would hope to.



Morris: Do you really expect that to happen?

Blunt: I do not know.

Morris: You worked at Buckingham Palace for a number of years. When you confessed in 1964 was The Queen aware of your confession?

Blunt: As far as I know, not. But this is something which I simply have not got accurate information - precise information - about. My understanding was that she was only told very much later. But from what has been said by Mrs. Thatcher and others, I may be wrong.

Morris: On the other hand her Private Secretary at the time, Sir Michael Adeane, was informed, surely he would have told The Queen?

Blunt: Well, I didn't know that he was informed. That again I only learned from Mrs. Thatcher's statement.

Morris: But in the circumstances surely as a self-confessed traitor would not the real gentlemanly thing to have done at the time would have been resigning from the Palace staff?

Blunt: I don't see that - I was there to do a job, and I still thought it was important to do and I was still doing it. I don't see why a confession in 1964 made any difference.

Morris: It was still deception thought of the Royal Family, wasn't it?

Blunt: If you had said that I should never have accepted the job I could see the logic. But why I should have resigned in '64 particularly I do not see.

Morris: Can we take you back now to the time when Burgess and Maclean had defected? Who tipped them off? Was it you?

Blunt: Philby.

Morris: You are quite sure of that?

Blunt: Absolutely certain. I had no information of this kind at all,



I had no contact with my former colleagues in MI5; I had no access to any information on this subject and the suggestion that I could have gone to an old friends in MI5 and asked this - the trickiest of all questions - it is absurd. It is also untrue.

Morris: Did you yourself though in turn tip off Philby when he was about to be questioned as a spy?

Blunt: No.

Morris: So who tipped him off?

Blunt: I do not know that.

Morris: You have been exposed as the fourth man. Who was the fifth man?

Blunt: I don't know. And the fifth man as mentioned by Boyle was a complete surprise to me. I had never heard any stories in any way corresponded to that. I am not saying it is not true but I simply had no indication that laid in that direction.

Morris: What about your friend in the art world, Thomas Harris, who was killed in an accident in Spain in 1964. Was he not involved in this spy ring?

Blunt: He, I am absolutely certain, was not. He was a great friend of mine and he was a great friend of both Philby and Guy Burgess but I am absolutely convinced that he was not involved. And I know that MI5 hold the same opinion.

Morris: You have admitted obviously that you spied for the Russians over a long period. How much were you paid for that spy work?

Blunt: Nothing.

Morris: Nothing at all? No reward of any kind? No awards of any kind?

Blunt: No.



Morris: So why did you do it apart from the political conscience?

Blunt: Well that was my reason.

Morris: How much do you think the Russians benefited by what you told them?

Blunt: Not, I think, a very great deal. I think that the information that I gave them about the German intelligence services during the War would have been useful but not very important. It might have helped them decipher a certain number of German codes but it was not high-grade stuff. I never had access to that sort of high-grade stuff.

Morris: But surely any information, however meaningless it may seem, could have led British agents to their death at that time -

Blunt: No. It never - no information that I had had any connection with any British agent or any British secret service.

Morris: Can you be absolutely sure that no British agents died as a result of your spying?

Blunt: Yes.

Morris: Categorically?

Blunt: Categorically.

Morris: Now, when you had made your confession were you at any time thinking in terms of defecting yourself to Russia - going away from this country for ever?

Blunt: No.

Morris: Why did you decide to stay here?

Blunt: Because I was totally disillusioned with Russia and by that time also even with actual Communism. And there would have been no possible reason to go there and all my interest in work lay here.



Morris: But you had struck a deal with them. What were you hoping to achieve? Perhaps a reactivation by the KGB?

Blunt: Was I hoping to achieve that?

Morris: Were the security service hoping to achieve that?

Blunt: Oh, I see, sorry. I don't think so.

Morris: So what in fact was your deal with the security service?

Blunt: They simply gave me immunity and I gave them a great deal of what I hoped was very valuable information.

Morris: Are you shocked now that that immunity has been blown?

Blunt: Shocked in what sense?

Morris: That no longer can you be regarded with the same respectability that you were.

Blunt: Of course I am.

Morris: What would you hope to do now in the future?

Blunt: I should hope to be able to go back to my academic work in art history.

Morris: Do you feel that your friends will accept you again though?

Blunt: From the evidence I have in writing and verbally and indirectly yes.

Morris: You do mention in your statement that you were invited to go to Russia on a visit and you say you refused. Why did you do that?

Blunt: I wasn't invited to go on a visit. I was ordered to go.

Morris: By whom?



Blunt: By my Russian contact.

Morris: Are you prepared to say who that contact is now?

Blunt: I don't know.

Morris: So how did you have communication with the Russians?

Blunt: Well it was through Burgess at that point. This was just after he had gone and they ordered me to go too but I couldn't bear the thought of living in Russia and preferred to take the risk of going on here rather than living under a regime which I by then abhorred.

Morris: Why do you think, Mr. Blunt, you were so successful for 40 years to conduct yourself unlike Burgess, Maclean or Philby in a double life?

Blunt: Well they did as well. They did it in a rather different way.

Morris: You worked in the War years for in effect two masters - your MI5 masters and your Russian masters. Was there not a conflict of interest there?

Blunt: On the whole not because they realised.

Morris: Why do you think your exposure now has suddenly come to light? Do you think there is some struggle within the security services?

Blunt: No. I think it was merely the ingenuity of Andrew Boyle.

Morris: Finally, my last question is on Andrew Boyle's book. You made considerable efforts to try and get that book stopped. Would you have gone into a witness box and perjured yourself?

Blunt: I made no attempts to get it stopped. An attempt to see an advance copy. But I made absolutely no attempt to get it stopped. I said I couldn't because I never succeeded in seeing the book.





*Seen by the P.M.*

*FWL  
20x1*

Ref. A0706

MR. WHITMORE

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At the Prime Minister's meeting on the evening of 18th November there was some discussion of the form of any enquiry that might need to be held into the handling of the Blunt affair. The Home Secretary undertook to consider this, and to report back to the Prime Minister.

2. The Home Secretary held a meeting yesterday evening to discuss this question.

3. We had just learned of the discovery of the records showing that the then Home Secretary was told by the then Director General of the Security Service in the spring of 1964, both about the likelihood of an offer of immunity from prosecution and of Blunt's confession. The Home Secretary came to the conclusion that this development was likely to make it unnecessary to offer an enquiry in the course of tomorrow's debate. He thought that it might still be necessary in the end to concede some kind of enquiry; but he suggested that the Prime Minister should not close the door on an enquiry in her speech opening the debate - while dealing with the whole matter in a way which would leave open the possibility of refusing an enquiry; that Ministers should take stock in the light of the debate; and that, depending on what happened, the Attorney General, in his winding up speech, should either say nothing or should say something to the effect that the Government would be considering what had been said in the debate and would take stock.

4. We discussed the questions to which an enquiry might be addressed. The Director General of the Security Service made clear his reluctance to see any form of enquiry which looked like an enquiry into the Security Service: that would damage the morale of his Service and divert them from their proper tasks. There was general agreement that it was desirable to avoid a wide-ranging enquiry into the whole handling of the Blunt affair. An enquiry might be addressed to two questions;





- (i) Had the investigations into Russian intelligence penetration of our public services, following the defection of Burgess and Maclean, been as thorough and effective as we should wish them to be?
- (ii) Have the necessary changes been made in security and other procedures, so as to safeguard against repetitions of things that went wrong in the handling of the Burgess-Maclean-Philby-Blunt affair, and in particular are the procedures now such as to minimise the risk of Soviet penetration of the security and intelligence services?

5. These two matters are of course squarely within the terms of reference of the Security Commission. If an enquiry was confined to those matters, it could be remitted to the Security Commission. On the other hand any enquiry with those terms of reference would look rather like an enquiry into the Security Service; and it might not be sufficiently wide-ranging to satisfy Parliamentary and public opinion.

6. In order to satisfy public opinion, it might be necessary to add a third item to the terms of reference:

- (iii) To make recommendations, in the light of the handling of the Blunt affair, as to how security matters of that kind should be handled as between the Security Service and Ministers.

There are two objections to making an enquiry cover those matters:-

- (a) It can now be seen that the handling of the Blunt affair in 1964 as between the Security Service and Ministers was strictly according to the book. If there was any failure or shortcoming, it was the then Home Secretary's failure to report to the Prime Minister.
- (b) Any such reference would have to extend to the handling of the Blunt affair by successive Prime Ministers. Here the question is not really whether the procedures were right: the Prime Ministers concerned, at any rate from 1972 onwards, were extremely fully informed. The question is whether they took the right decision; and that is not a matter which is suitable for an independent enquiry.

7. That is how matters stand, following the Home Secretary's meeting yesterday. We should clearly take stock in the light of tomorrow's debate.





8. At the Prime Minister's meeting on 18th November, when it was felt that it was very likely that some form of enquiry would have to be conceded, the front runner was an enquiry by Lord Diplock sitting alone, on the lines of the enquiry by Lord Denning into the Profumo affair in 1963.

9. At the meeting the Attorney General referred to the criticisms that Lord Salmon's Royal Commission (1966) made of this kind of enquiry. I attach copies of the relevant paragraphs of the Salmon Report (paragraph 21 and paragraphs 37-42). The recommendation was that "No Government in the future should ever in any circumstances whatsoever set up a Tribunal of the type adopted in the Profumo case to investigate any matter causing nation-wide public concern".

10. I recognise the strength of the argument that to set up an enquiry would play a lot of the questions into touch. But, thinking about it all since the discussion on 18th November, I am reinforced in my conviction that we should avoid an enquiry if at all possible, not only for the reasons cited by the Salmon Commission but also for the following reasons:

1. It could not be held otherwise than in private and in confidence. Most of the evidence could not be published, and in the case of much of it there would be no opportunity for one witness to comment on what another had said. It might be another "brilliant exception" like the Denning Report, and the Government might get away with it because the report would come out at a time when Press and public interest had died away. But it might be regarded in the event as failing to satisfy public interest. I fear that we should be fortunate if its outcome was regarded as disposing of the matter.
2. Any enquiry would be considerably hampered by the facts that:
  - (a) written records in these matters are so incomplete;
  - (b) as we have seen vividly illustrated in the last couple of days, memories over so long a period are fallible;
  - (c) many of the principal characters are dead.





3. It is especially true in this kind of case that, if there is an enquiry, names inevitably get banded about, as each witness names three or four other people whom he suspected. Even if the enquiry is held in private, people gossip and things leak. The fact that the enquiry is going on will keep Press interest alive: they will have people watching who goes in and out of the enquiry, and we shall be regaled with a series of stories and speculations, most of them fantastic.
4. Any enquiry is likely to be regarded as to some extent an enquiry into the Security Service; and the Director General has emphasised again to the Home Secretary his concern about the damage which that could do to the morale and effectiveness of the Security Service.
11. At the meeting on 18th November, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary identified three main difficulties:
- (a) Was The Queen told?
  - (b) Were Ministers told, or is there a secret establishment running the country behind the backs of Ministers?
  - (c) Can we be sure that the security and intelligence services are now clear of penetration?
12. No enquiry of whatever kind can deal with the first point.
13. The second point is largely disposed of by the latest discoveries that the then Home Secretary was told, and the Security Service did strictly what it should. It should now be possible to allay this particular cause of concern by a firm restatement of the course which the Director General of the Security Service, the Attorney General and the Home Secretary are expected to follow if such a situation arises.
14. On the third point, an enquiry could give a clean bill of health, or suggest improvements, to the vetting system as it now is, but it could not provide a guarantee that the system is 100 per cent proof against penetration. This concern too can perhaps be allayed by a firm statement in the Prime Minister's speech tomorrow.
15. I am sending a copy of this minute to the Private Secretary to the Home Secretary and to the Legal Secretary to the Law Officers.

RA

(Robert Armstrong)

20th November, 1979



21. In 1963 Mr. Profumo, the Secretary of State for War, made a personal statement in the House of Commons denying that there was any truth in the story that he had had a liaison with Christine Keeler. He afterwards admitted that this statement was untrue. There followed wide-spread rumours. It was alleged that there had been a serious security risk in that Mr. Profumo had been sharing Christine Keeler as a mistress with the Russian naval attaché; that the Government knew or ought to have known that the personal statement made by Mr. Profumo was untrue; that certain members of the Government failed in their duty by approving the personal statement before it had been made, particularly as they had done so without taking any steps to check whether or not it was true. There were also many other rumours relating to this case. The Government decided that to allay the very wide-spread public concern, an inquiry should be held. They decided however not to set up a Tribunal for this purpose under the Act of 1921; instead they appointed Lord Denning, the Master of the Rolls, to hold this inquiry. This task he performed with conspicuous success despite the difficulties inherent in the procedure which he followed. The inquiry was conducted behind closed doors. None of the witnesses heard any of the evidence given against him by others or had any opportunity of testing such evidence. The transcript of the evidence was never published. Lord Denning had in effect to act as detective, solicitor, counsel and judge. In spite of the many serious defects in this procedure, Lord Denning's Report<sup>1</sup> was generally accepted by the public. But this was only because of Lord Denning's rare qualities and high reputation. Even so, the public acceptance of the Report may be regarded as a brilliant exception to what would normally occur when an inquiry is carried out under such conditions.



3. *An inquiry of the type carried out by Lord Denning into the Profumo case*

37. In the chapter dealing with the history of Tribunals of Inquiry in this country, we have referred to the difficult conditions under which this inquiry was carried out and expressed the view that the measure of acceptance which the report achieved was due to the exceptional qualities and standing of Lord Denning alone, and should be regarded as a brilliant exception to what would normally occur when an investigation is carried out under such conditions. Although Lord Denning considered that this type of inquiry had some advantages, he was most conscious of the disadvantages which were inseparable from it. Referring to the advantages he said at pages 2 and 3 of his Report . . . "there can be no dissent . . . in as much as it has been held in private and in strict confidence, the witnesses were, I am sure, much more frank than they would otherwise have been . . . I was able to check the evidence of one witness against that of another more freely . . . and more important, aspersions cast by witnesses against others (who are not able to defend themselves) do not achieve the publicity which is inevitable in a Court of Law or Tribunal of Inquiry. . . ." Referring to the disadvantages, Lord Denning said on the same pages of his Report ". . . it



has two great disadvantages: first, being in secret, it has not the appearance of justice; second, in carrying out the inquiry, I have had to be detective, inquisitor, advocate and judge, and it has been difficult to combine them . . . . At every stage of this inquiry I have been faced with this great anxiety: How far should I go into matters which seem to show that someone or other has been guilty of a criminal offence, or of professional misconduct, or moral turpitude, or even incompetence? My inquiry is not a suitable body to determine guilt or innocence. I have not the means at my disposal. No witness has given evidence on oath. None has been cross-examined. No charge has been preferred. No opportunity to defend has been open. It poses for me an inescapable dilemma: on the one hand, if I refrain from going into such matters my inquiry will be thwarted. . . . Suspicions that have already fallen heavily on innocent persons may not be removed. Yet, on the other hand, if I do go into these matters I may well place persons under a cloud when it is undeserved; and I may impute to them offences or misconduct which they have never had the chance to rebut." Such a method of investigation is not so objectionable where there is, in truth, no foundation for the rumours or allegations causing a nation-wide crisis of confidence. The report will state the truth. The only defect in the procedure is that since everything takes place behind closed doors, the truth may not be generally accepted.

38. If, however, there is in reality an evil to be exposed and any of the allegations or rumours causing the nation-wide crisis of confidence are true, it is extremely difficult, if not practically impossible, for the report to establish the truth. When a person against whom allegations are made is not even allowed to hear the evidence brought against him, let alone to check it by cross-examination, when he has "never had the chance to rebut" the case against him, how can any judicially-minded Tribunal be satisfied, save in the most exceptional circumstances, that the allegations have been made out? In these most exceptional cases, if they ever occur, in which such a Tribunal felt justified in making an adverse finding against anyone, that person would feel and the public might also feel that he had a real grievance in that he had had no chance of defending himself. It follows that the odds against any such Tribunal being able to establish the truth, if the truth is black, are very heavy indeed, and accordingly the truth may remain hidden from the light of day.

39. We do not believe that it can ever be right for any inquiry of this kind to be held entirely in secret save on the grounds of security. It is true that a Tribunal does not hold a trial but only investigates and reports. Nevertheless reputations and careers may depend upon their findings, e.g., in the Budget Leak Tribunal which was held in public the Tribunal found that there had been an unauthorised disclosure by Mr. J. H. Thomas to Sir Alfred Butt of information relating to the Budget and that use was made by Sir Alfred Butt of that information for private gain; thus ended both their political careers.

40. It is said that sometimes witnesses are willing to give evidence only if they are allowed to give it in private or in confidence. This is no doubt true. But such evidence in matters of this kind is treated as suspect by the general public and, in our view, rightly so. Secrecy increases the quantity of evidence but tends to debase its quality.



41. It is possible that in the future the same type of salacious rumour as some of those which were in circulation at the time of the Profumo case may circulate again. No doubt it would be wrong to investigate them in public. The point is whether they should be investigated at all. It is no part of the duty of government to satisfy idle curiosity about scandalous gossip. It does not seem to us appropriate for a tribunal of any kind to inquire into such rumours. Gossip about such matters as these is hardly likely to cause a nation-wide crisis of confidence and is best ignored. It is an entirely different matter when it is alleged that a Minister has put himself in a situation which creates a real security risk, or that colleagues have allowed a Minister to make a personal statement which they ought to have known was untrue. If in the future there is a nation-wide crisis of confidence about any matters of this kind they should in our opinion be investigated before a Tribunal appointed under the Act of 1921.

42. We recommend that no Government in the future should ever in any circumstances whatsoever set up a Tribunal of the type adopted in the Profumo case to investigate any matter causing nation-wide public concern. For the reasons we have stated, we are satisfied that such a method of inquiry is inferior to, and certainly no acceptable substitute for, an inquiry under the Act of 1921.





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*Seen by the P.M.*

*FW*

*20xi*

PRIME MINISTER

I went to see Lord Home of the Hirsel at 11.30 am today.

2. Lord Home said that he had been worried about the reports in the Press and the broadcasting media which hinted that Ministers might have been told about Blunt's confession in 1964 but might have forgotten.

3. I took Lord Home through the sequence of events, beginning with a meeting which he held in February with other Ministers about another security case, and going through to the Director General's note of his meeting with the Home Secretary on 17th June 1964 when he told the Home Secretary and Sir Charles Cunningham about Blunt's confession.

4. Lord Home said that he still could not recollect having been told anything about it. It was surprising that he should not have been, since the matter affected The Queen and the then Home Secretary had always been scrupulous about reporting to him and keeping him informed about security matters. Lord Home supposed that the Home Secretary could have mentioned the matter to him orally at the end of a Cabinet meeting, and he might have failed to hold the matter in his mind. But he thought that he could hardly have forgotten being told of such a matter, and that he would almost certainly have wanted to talk to the Secretary of the Cabinet about it and perhaps to hold a meeting with the Home Secretary, the Attorney General and the Director General of the Security Service. I said that I had recently talked to Lord Trend, who had no recollection of being brought into the matter before 1972 (though I have since learned that it was mentioned to him by Sir Charles Cunningham in 1967). Lord Trend has no recollection of being told by the Home Office or the Prime Minister in 1964. I told Lord Home that there was no record in the papers of his having been told by the Home Secretary. Clearly this was not conclusive since such matters were often not committed to writing.

5. I told him that Lord Brooke was being told about the two meetings at which he was informed. I promised to let him know whether, when Lord Brooke's recollection was thus prompted, he also recalled telling the





CONFIDENTIAL

Prime Minister. If Lord Brooke did not recall telling the Prime Minister, I thought that you might want to say in your speech tomorrow something to the effect that it was the Home Secretary's responsibility to inform the Prime Minister; to those who know Lord Brooke it would be surprising if he did not do so, even if neither of them now recollects that he did. Lord Home said that he would have no objection to something on these lines.

6. If he was asked about the matter, he could only say that he did not recollect ever having been told of the matter, but he supposed that his memory could be at fault.

7. I am sending a copy of this minute to the Home Secretary.

(Robert Armstrong)

20th November 1979



Ref: A0704

MR. WHITMORE

I attach a revised version of the draft speech for the Prime Minister to make in the Blunt Debate tomorrow.

*Paragraph deleted and closed under  
FOI Exemption. CWayland, 11 March 2014*

3. I have added in square brackets at the end of the passage a draft paragraph about Professor Blunt. The AttorneyGeneral has said that he thinks that it would be unwise for the Prime Minister to use this paragraph. It can be dropped without detriment to the structure of the speech.

4. I am sending copies of this revised version for the comments of those concerned.

*MAV.  
RP*

(Robert Armstrong)

20th November 1979



The case of Prof. Blunt raises a very important  
issue for the House & the country. It was for that  
reason I gave a very full reply ~~to the~~ <sup>to the</sup> ~~House~~ <sup>to the</sup> ~~question~~ <sup>question</sup> ~~for~~ <sup>for</sup>  
today I will deal with

Mr. Speaker, the statement that I made about the case of  
Professor Blunt on 15th November in reply to the Hon. Gentleman the Member  
for the Hartlepoons was a very full one - unusually so, if I may be allowed to  
say so, for a statement on security matters. I make no apology for that. As  
events had turned out, I thought that the House was entitled to as full an account  
of the matter as I could give. I hope this afternoon to deal with the questions  
to which it has given rise.

2. Some have said that I should have chosen to give my account as an oral  
statement. The fact was that the Hon. Gentleman had put down a Question for  
Priority Written Answer. I had no wish to duck or postpone an answer. As  
the House will recall, we had important statements from the Despatch Box on  
Wednesday and Tuesday last week. Moreover what I had to say on the Blunt  
case was long and detailed, and perhaps easier for Hon. Members to apprehend  
from a written text than from an oral statement. In the circumstances it  
seemed to me that I should not be lacking in courtesy or respect to the House  
if I gave my statement as a Written Answer to the Hon. Gentleman's Question.  
I was of course well aware that Hon. Members would have plenty of opportunities  
to ask my supplementary questions, either on the Order Paper, or when I  
answer Oral Questions, or in a debate, of the kind which we are now having.

3. As I said in my answer, Professor Blunt admitted that he had been  
recruited by Russian Intelligence when he was a don at Cambridge before the  
war. He has now given his own account of the reasons why he allowed himself  
to be recruited, and I do not need to take the time of the House in discussing  
those reasons. As we know, he was not the only man of that generation at  
Cambridge who not only avowed Marxist views but also persuaded himself or  
was persuaded to become an agent of Russian intelligence.

4. Then in 1940 he joined the Security Service. To us today it seems  
extraordinary that a man who had made no secret of his Marxist beliefs could  
have been accepted for secret work in any part of the public service, let alone  
the Security Service. But that is with the benefit of hindsight. Perhaps it was  
easier then than now to believe that the espousal of the Marxist interpretation of

Kingdom was made before he joined





~~history and society need not be regarded as incompatible with working in sensitive areas of the public service.~~ Perhaps, ~~too~~, standards were relaxed, <sup>because it was</sup> ~~as we would now think misguidedly,~~ at a time of considerable expansion and recruitment to deal with the wartime tasks of the Service, which were directed against Hitler's Germany.

5. For us today, the important question is: could it happen now? We have learned a great deal since 1940; and procedures are very different today. As the House knows, the positive vetting procedure was introduced after the war, by the Labour Government of the day. The Security Service quite rightly exercises the most special degree of care both in its arrangements for recruitment and in its vetting procedures. One learns not to use the word "never" in politics; but I can say with confidence that I do not believe that any one who shared what we now know to have been Professor Blunt's political views could be appointed to any post requiring regular access to classified information in any part of the public service, let alone to the Security Service.

6. During his period in the Security Service, from 1940 to 1945, Professor Blunt has said that he regularly passed to Russian intelligence anything that came his way which would be of interest to them. We do not know, of course, exactly what information he passed; we do know, however, to what information he had access by virtue of his duties. British interests were ~~no~~ doubt seriously damaged by his activities. <sup>but</sup> ~~It is however very~~ unlikely that British military operations ~~or British lives~~ were put at risk. ~~And I can assure the House~~ <sup>if you like</sup> that the story that he put the lives of secret agents in the Netherlands at risk is without foundation; he was never in the Special Operations Executive. ~~It is regrettable that that story was not properly checked out before it was published.~~

7. ~~From the time when he~~ left the Security Service in 1945 and resumed his career as an art historian, Professor Blunt ceased to have access to classified information. ~~He himself has said that from 1945 to 1951 he passed no information to the Russians.~~

8. In May 1951 an investigation which had continued for some years at last caught up with Donald Maclean. It was Philby who warned Burgess to tell Maclean that he was about to be interrogated; and Burgess used Blunt, a friend of long standing as well as a fellow agent, as a contact with a Soviet controller





to assist in the arrangements for Maclean's flight to Russia - a journey in which Burgess eventually joined him. On one occasion between 1951 and 1956, Blunt admits that he assisted Philby in contacting the Russian intelligence. He has said that he has had no contact with Russian intelligence since then.

9. The defection of Burgess and Maclean led to the initiation of intense, ~~wide-ranging~~ and prolonged investigations of the extent to which the security and other public services had been ~~penetrated~~ <sup>infiltrated</sup> by Russian intelligence. At an early stage in these investigations Professor Blunt came under inquiry <sup>This was</sup> as a result of information to the effect that Burgess had been heard in 1937 to say that he was working for a secret branch of the Comintern and that Blunt was one of his sources. Blunt denied this. Nevertheless he remained under suspicion, and became the subject of intense <sup>in</sup> investigation. ~~As I said in my answer to the Hon. Member for the Hartlepoons,~~ he was interviewed on eleven occasions. He persisted in his denial, and no evidence against him was obtained. ~~Under his~~ <sup>relating to an earlier period</sup> ~~confession~~

10. It was early in 1964 that new information was received <sup>relating to an earlier period</sup> which directly implicated Blunt. I cannot disclose the nature of that information; ~~I can,~~ however, <sup>but</sup> say that it was not useable as evidence on which to base a prosecution. In this situation the security authorities were faced with a difficult choice:-

- (i) They could do nothing, and hope that further information of a kind which could be used as a basis for prosecuting Blunt would in due course be discovered.
- (ii) They could confront Professor Blunt with the new information, to see if it would break his denial. <sup>But - add para 12 over page</sup>
- (iii) ~~They could hope to secure not merely an admission of his own involvement but also his co-operation in their continuing investigations, by confronting him with the new information and, having obtained the authority of the Attorney General, offering him an immunity from prosecution.~~

11. <sup>But</sup> As to the first course, the security authorities had already pursued their inquiries for thirteen years without obtaining firm evidence against Blunt: there was no reason to expect or hope that a further wait would be likely to yield evidence of a kind which had eluded them so far.

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12. ~~As to the second course~~, Blunt had persisted in his denial at eleven interviews; the security authorities had no reason to suppose that he would do otherwise at a twelfth. If the security authorities confronted him with the new ~~information~~, and he ~~persisted~~ <sup>still</sup> in his denial, their investigation of him would be no further forward and they would be at risk of prejudicing other inquiries.

*starting him*

13. So they decided to ask the Attorney General, through the acting Director of Public Prosecutions, to authorise the offer to Blunt of immunity from prosecution, if he ~~confessed~~ <sup>look</sup> and agreed to co-operate in their further investigations.

14. I should like to pause for a moment on this question of granting immunity, because I think that there may remain some misunderstanding about it. There ~~is of course nothing unusual about a~~ <sup>it is not</sup> request ~~to~~ <sup>to</sup> the Attorney General ~~for~~ <sup>to</sup> authority ~~to offer~~ <sup>to</sup> immunity from prosecution in ~~exchange~~ <sup>return</sup> for co-operation in the pursuit of another inquiry. It ~~can and does~~ happen from time to time in the course of criminal investigations. The ~~decision is one which~~, <sup>the decision</sup> under our constitutional arrangements, ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> taken by the Attorney General in his capacity as a Law Officer, ~~not as a member of the Government~~. <sup>He takes it on the basis of what he decides to do</sup> The ~~decision must be~~ based on a balance of the public interest. He may consult his colleagues, ~~if he~~ thinks it desirable to do so, as to the various, usually conflicting, considerations of public interest which arise. But he ~~need not do so~~; and, if he does do so, he is not bound by their advice or views. ~~the decision is his alone.~~

*in his view is best -*

15. In this case the then Attorney General <sup>Sir John Hobson</sup> decided that it was in the public interest to offer an immunity from prosecution. ~~That was a decision he was entitled to take~~, and I think it can fairly be claimed that it was not in the ~~circumstances an unreasonable or irresponsible decision~~. Prosecution was not ~~then~~ and seemed unlikely to become, an available alternative; confrontation without an immunity was unlikely to produce a confession or willingness to co-operate in further inquiries; and to do nothing at all with the new information, after in effect waiting for thirteen years to get it, cannot have seemed an attractive prospect. ~~The fact is that there is not to this day~~ <sup>there is no fresh</sup> any evidence, ~~other~~ than Blunt's confession, which could be used as a basis for prosecution



He has provided ~~material~~ information about Russian military and economic activities in connection with the Profumo - Philby.

16. So the offer of immunity was made; Professor Blunt confessed; and both at the time and subsequently ~~he~~ has co-operated in the inquiries of the security authorities.

17. After the Attorney General's authority ~~had been given~~ <sup>to</sup> for the offer of immunity, The Queen's Private Secretary was invited to a meeting with the Permanent Under Secretary of State at the Home Office and the Director General of the Security Service, <sup>at which</sup> ~~at which~~ he was told that Professor Blunt was suspected of having been an agent of Russian intelligence, ~~and was shortly to be invited to confess and to co-operate in the inquiries of the security authorities on the understanding that he would be granted immunity from prosecution.~~ <sup>but that he provided he</sup> The point of telling The Queen's Private Secretary <sup>was not to</sup> ~~was of course~~ that Blunt held an <sup>unpaid</sup> ~~unpaid~~ appointment in the Royal Household since 1945, and had been awarded a Knighthood in the Royal Victorian Order in 1956. The Queen's Private Secretary ~~therefore~~ <sup>and</sup> asked what action The Queen was advised to take. He was told that The Queen was advised to take no action, ~~and that it was not desirable that Blunt should be required to resign his appointment in the Royal Household or to forfeit his Knighthood.~~ Clearly it would have made little sense to secure Blunt's co-operation in continuing inquiries, by offering him immunity from prosecution, and then, by dismissing him from his post in the Royal Household and stripping him of his honour, ~~not only to put that co-operation at risk, but also to prejudice other inquiries by alerting his former controllers and other subjects still under investigation to the fact that he had confessed and could well be giving information.~~ <sup>because it is to do so</sup> <sup>would have risked</sup> <sup>Russian</sup> <sup>as well as those who are providing</sup>

already under

18. I turn now to the question of informing Ministers. ~~Perhaps I could remind the House that~~ relations between the Security Service and Ministers are governed by the Directive given to the Director General by Sir David Maxwell Fyfe <sup>in</sup> ~~on~~ 24th September 1952, which is reproduced in paragraph 238 of Lord Denning's Report <sup>(Cmd 2152) of July 1963, para 238</sup> ~~on the Profumo Affair.~~ As Lord Denning said, <sup>when</sup> discussing and endorsing the principles embodied in this Directive ~~in a Report which was published only a few months before the event with which I am now dealing:~~

Lord Denning said





"The Head of the Security Service is responsible directly to the Home Secretary for the efficient and proper working of the Service and not in the ordinary way to the Prime Minister... The Head of the Security Service may approach the Prime Minister himself on matters of supreme importance and delicacy, but this is not to say that the Prime Minister has any direct responsibility for the Security Service... If the Director General of the Security Service is in any doubt as to any aspect of his duties - as, for instance, when he gets information about a Minister or a senior public servant indicating that he may be a security risk - he should consult the Home Secretary. The Home Secretary will then have to take responsibility for further action."

19. Mr. Speaker, I <sup>can</sup> ~~am able to~~ tell the House that in the <sup>case of Prof. Blunt -</sup> ~~affair in question~~ the Director General of the Security Service adhered scrupulously to the duties laid upon him. I have here in my possession a copy of two notes which he ~~made~~ <sup>he had a meeting</sup> at the time. ~~The first records a conversation which he had with the Home Secretary on 2nd March 1964, in the course of which he told the Home Secretary (having first spoken to his Permanent Secretary) about the new information implicating Blunt, and indicating that he would be discussing~~ <sup>with the Director of Public Prosecutions how to handle</sup> the interview with Blunt, given that the Security Service's interest lay in getting intelligence ~~rather than bringing a~~ <sup>rather than bringing a</sup> ~~prosecution.~~ <sup>prosecution.</sup> The Home Secretary drew his attention to the need to inform The Queen's Private Secretary. ~~The second note records a meeting which the Director General had with the Home Secretary and his Permanent Secretary on~~ <sup>17th June 1964,</sup> in which he reported that Blunt had admitted spying for the Russians throughout the war when he was serving in the Security Service.

20. ~~These contemporary records clearly conflict with Lord Brooke's recollection of what he was told. I have naturally told him of this, and have arranged for him to see the records concerned. He has with characteristic honesty accepted that his recollection must have been at fault and that the records must be accepted as a true account of what he was told.~~

The Home Secretary ~~of the time~~ <sup>has had the opportunity</sup> of the day. Now Lord Brooke has had the opportunity to consult the ~~records~~ <sup>press</sup> ~~documents~~ which record these meetings.

0 ~





*The papers also show*

21. ~~It has also been confirmed from the contemporary documents~~ that when the Attorney General took his decision to authorise the offer of immunity from prosecution he knew that the Home Secretary had been made aware of the matter.

22. There was therefore no failure on the part of the Security Service to carry out their duty to inform the Home Secretary of these matters. It was <sup>for</sup> the Home Secretary's responsibility to decide whether the Prime Minister should be informed. ~~To those who know Lord Brooke, a man of the most scrupulous integrity and conscientiousness, it would be surprising if he did not do so, even if neither of them now recollects that he did.~~ *There is no record on this particular point. Neither Lord Brooke nor Lord Home can recall anything like matter.*

23. In the light of these events I see no need to change the principles governing the relationships between the Security Service and Ministers, as set out in the Denning Report. I think it right, however, that there should be a clear understanding among all those concerned about how we expect those principles to be put into effect. I have accordingly agreed with my right hon. Friends the Home Secretary and the Attorney General as follows:-

- (i) The Director General should report to the Home Secretary <sup>when</sup> ~~he gets~~ <sup>recalls</sup> information about a present or former Minister or senior public servant <sup>indicating that he is or may be</sup> ~~who may or may not have been~~ a security risk, unless circumstances are so exceptional that he judges it necessary to report direct to the Prime Minister.
- (ii) When the Director General has ~~so~~ reported to the Home Secretary, it is the Home Secretary's responsibility to inform the Prime Minister (or to make sure that he is informed) ~~and he should in every case do so unless there are absolutely overriding reasons why he should not.~~
- (iii) If the Attorney General is asked to authorise a grant of immunity from prosecution in a case involving national security, he should satisfy himself that the Home Secretary is aware that the request has been made, and <sup>that he</sup> ~~has~~ had an opportunity to express <sup>his</sup> ~~any~~ view <sup>as to what he</sup> ~~which he may wish to express~~ upon the balance of public interest <sup>involved.</sup> In cases of especial doubt or difficulty the Attorney General or the Home Secretary, or both, may wish to see





that the Prime Minister is given a similar opportunity. ~~The Attorney General and the Home Secretary should always be informed when an offer of immunity, has been made and what the outcome is, it is the responsibility of the Home Secretary to decide whether the Prime Minister needs to be informed, with the assumption that that should be done unless there is good reason to the contrary.~~

~~I hope and believe that that is what would happen nowadays. By formulating it in that way and telling the House that I have done so, I hope that I have ensured that in future that is what will happen.~~

24. ~~Successive Prime Ministers and Home Secretaries since the change of Government in 1964 have all been informed about the position. I have not of course seen the submission made to my predecessors, nor do I know what their reactions were. I am not responsible and will not try to answer for what they did or did not do. If, however, I may speak from my own experience when this was first put to me soon after taking office, one was not being presented with a new situation which required a new decision. One was being presented with an existing state of affairs, and what one had to consider was whether there was good reason - some change in the circumstances, for instance - which required one to consider taking a different decision from that which, evidently, one's predecessors had taken. It is clear that my predecessors thought it right not to bring about a change in the situation which was presented to them. What has led me to take a different decision now has of course been a change in the circumstances: the publication of Mr. Andrew Boyle's book, and the subsequent naming of Professor Blunt, which has destroyed the benefits for continuing investigations of continuing to live with the situation created by the decisions reached in 1964.~~

25. ~~As I indicated in my statement, the matter was brought to the attention of successive Attorneys-General in 1972, June 1974 and June 1979. This was for the purpose of informing them of the immunity that had been given and to seek their agreement about the legal position in respect of the confession which had been obtained. As to other evidence, apart from the confession, none was, and to this day none is, available. There are matters however which my right Hon. and Learned Friend the Attorney General will deal with later in the debate.~~





~~The question has been raised whether it was  
I have been asked why a day's notice of~~

My  
do not  
could  
possibly  
was just

26. It has been suggested that I should not have given authority for Professor Blunt's legal adviser, to be warned the day before that I was going to make the statement I made in answer to the Hon. Member for the Hartlepool. I do not understand this. Had there been any question of prosecuting Blunt, of course there would have been no advance <sup>notice</sup> warning - and, <sup>indeed as intended</sup> come to that, probably <sup>no statement either.</sup> As it was, since there was no question of prosecution, there was no question of enabling Blunt to escape justice.. It was surely a matter of elementary consideration to enable his legal adviser to prepare Professor Blunt, who is now elderly and not in good health, and who has after all co-operated with the security authorities in their inquiries, for what would without warning have been an unexpected and severe shock.

been  
going to

27. It has been alleged that Professor Blunt was given an unofficial tip-off, some hours before the official warning to his legal adviser, to enable him to pack his bags and flee the country. That is of course nonsense, as can be seen from the fact that he has not fled the country and says he has no intention of doing so.

28. Mr. Speaker, what are the questions to which we in Parliament should now be addressing our minds in the light of this <sup>case</sup> affair? They are surely these:  
(i) Have the investigations into Russian intelligence penetration of our public services been as thorough and as effective as we should wish them to be?  
(ii) Have the necessary changes been made, so as to safeguard against repetitions of what went wrong?

29. I have myself received reports of the investigations that were <sup>followed</sup> started after the defection of Burgess and Maclean and have continued ever since. I can assure the House that they have indeed been extremely thorough. They have looked closely and deeply into the position of all those who have at any time been named in connection with this affair. Of those who have been looked at, many are now dead. Many others have left the public service, either on or before retirement. There is nobody remaining in the public service who is still under suspicion. Of course it is not absolutely impossible even now that some information may in the future come to light which implicates someone who has





not so far been or is not now under suspicion; but it is by now very unlikely, and I do not believe that the only sort of inquiry that would be possible would make it any more likely.

30. Clearly the public services <sup>we</sup> ~~remains~~ an attractive target for Soviet penetration, and the Security Service especially so. The Service is very conscious of that <sup>danger.</sup> indeed, in the light of all that has happened it ~~is desirable~~ and not at all surprising that it should be. Procedures for recruitment, vetting and monitoring members of the public services who have ~~or are likely to have~~ access to classified information have been much extended and improved. I must not say that these precautions are guaranteed 100 per cent proof against penetration; I will say that I think that they ~~come as near to that as is~~ reasonable to expect if we are to retain the standards of a liberal, humane and democratic society. *come nothing can be done*  
*In a democratic society, it is always possible that there will be use of freedom to discuss freely. We must do everything we can to prevent that.*

31. There is one other point which I should make. I am well aware that at least some of those who have been critical of some aspects of the way in which they thought this affair has been dealt with are motivated not by a desire to make sure that the lessons of the past are applied to the improvement of security for the future, but by a desire to expose the security authorities to sniping attack, to undermine their morale, to divert their attention from their main task, and thus to reduce both the effectiveness of the security authorities and the protection of the country from the threats of espionage and subversion. *We must*

32. Because the Security Service has by its nature to operate in secret and cannot defend itself, it is vulnerable to that sort of ill-intentioned and ill-founded criticism, sometimes from people who should know better. It is of course the duty of Ministers to satisfy themselves that the Security Service operates both efficiently and scrupulously within the letter and spirit of its Directive. My Right Hon. Friend, the Home Secretary and I accept that duty and we are accountable to this House for the discharge of that duty. We also have a duty to protect the Security Service's morale and effectiveness, and to defend it from unfounded or ill-intentioned criticism.

33. The Service has been the subject of a certain amount of attack in recent years. The last case I remember was in the summer of 1977. That caused my predecessor to look into the allegations that were made, and to issue a statement on 23rd August 1977 to say that he was satisfied that the allegations were





unfounded and to express his confidence in the Service. I am glad to be able to express my confidence in it. I believe that it does a difficult job, and a job of great importance for the preservation of our democratic society from the risks of espionage and subversion, with a high degree of professional skill and competence, and a proper sense of professional dedication which avoids the obvious dangers of improper excess of zeal. So long as it continues to satisfy me that it is conducting itself in that manner, it can count on my support.

34. Mr. Speaker, there is one final point I should like to make before I sit down. It is this. Nothing can excuse Professor Blunt's disloyalty to his country in the now fairly distant past. It is true that he has for many years been protected from its consequences; but he has had to live with himself and his knowledge of it; now he has to live with the public disgrace. But he confessed what he did; co-operated in the inquiries of the security authorities; unlike some of those who were associated with him in his disloyalty, he has not run away; and he has made it clear that he wishes to stay in this country and follow his calling, in which he is a man of unchallengeable distinction who has given much and has more to give. Without wishing to excuse what he did in the past, his present conduct seems to me to be courageous and dignified. I commend to the House the thought that, once the hysteria that we have seen these last few days has subsided, he should be left in peace to get on with his work.]



Ref. A0703

MR. WHITMORE

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c Mr. Ingham

The Prime Minister may be asked, at Questions today, about my interview yesterday with Mr. Michael Rubinstein, Professor Blunt's solicitor. I offer the following material as a basis for her reply:

Professor Blunt's legal adviser requested an interview in order to enable him to satisfy himself and his client that nothing in the statement which Professor Blunt proposed to make to the Press would be prejudicial to national security. I authorised the Secretary of the Cabinet to agree to the request and to see Mr. Rubinstein on that basis. The interview took place at 11.45 am on 19th November. Mr. Rubinstein was told that there was nothing in the statement which was considered to be prejudicial to national security. A few minor changes of wording were suggested for the sake of accuracy or clarity. Mr. Rubinstein also provided information about the timing of the statement and the arrangements for its issue and for subsequent questioning by the media.

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

20th November, 1979





From the Secretary of the Cabinet

Mr Whitman

Sir Robert Armstrong is correct.

He understands that the P.M.  
may feel bound to use A3 if  
asked a direct Question. There  
would however be much to be  
said for keeping this for the  
debate.

M.V.

27.



Sir Robert Armstrong

NOTE OF POSSIBLE SUPPLEMENTARIES AND SUGGESTED ANSWERS

This is a consolidated and numbered list of supplementaries. The formal Minister will have it by his 11th Questions this afternoon, though you are hoping to deal with supplementaries by reference to the debate tomorrow. Only Q3 + Q8 are need: the answers are based on your draft. The new information that the Home Secretary's involvement. Are you content? full 20th

"Cover-up"

Q1. Why has there been a "cover-up" of this matter until it was brought out into the open by publication of the book?  
A. I can only answer for the situation as I found it. But immunity was given to Blunt and he has since been a source of useful information; the Government could hardly therefore take the initiative in exposing him. Others who knew or suspected were no doubt deterred by the risk of proceedings for libel.

Q2. [Any questions about why Ministers or others did or did not act in the manner they did?]

A. The statement gives an account of what happened. I cannot answer for the reasons for what was done or not done under previous Administrations.

Q3. Which Ministers knew about Blunt's confession?

A. The Home Secretary was told at the time of the confession, but there is no evidence to show that the Prime Minister, now Lord Home, was informed. Since October 1964 I understand that successive Prime Ministers and Home Secretaries have all been told of the position.

Q4. Was Blunt protected by former colleagues in the Security Service?

A. Colleagues of Blunt who were interrogated in the course of investigations to which I have referred co-operated fully.

Q5. Is it not the fact that Goronwy Rees informed the authorities in 1951 that Burgess had told him that Blunt was a Russian agent? Why was no action taken at the time?

A. Mr. Rees was the source of the allegation made to the Security Service in 1951 that Burgess had said that Blunt was one of the sources used by Burgess for his work for the Comintern. That allegation was thoroughly examined in the course of the prolonged investigation of Blunt from 1951 onwards, but, as I have said, no supporting evidence was obtained until Blunt confessed in 1964.



Q6. Why was Corporal Berry prosecuted and Blunt not?

A. Decisions to prosecute are for the Attorney General. But I would remind the hon. Gentleman that there has never been any evidence which would sustain a charge against Blunt, other than his own confession which was obtained on a promise of immunity from prosecution.

The Palace

Q7. Was the Palace informed about Blunt's record?

A. The Queen's Private Secretary was informed in 1964,

*Passage deleted and closed under FOI Exemption.*

*©Wayland, 11 March 2014*

Q8. Was The Queen told in 1964?

A. Communications between The Queen and Her Private Secretary are always a matter of strict confidence.

Q9. Why was Blunt allowed to continue to hold a post in the Royal Household after his past relationship with the Russian Intelligence Service was known?

A. Blunt's position in the Royal Household, which was unpaid, involved no access to classified information and no risk to security. Following a promise of immunity from prosecution he had confessed and co-operated with his interrogators. The security authorities felt that it was desirable to avoid taking any action which might have put at risk his willingness to continue to provide useful information.

Q10. Why did the Government of the day not tell Buckingham Palace about their suspicions and interrogations between 1951 and 1964?

A. I cannot answer for previous Administrations. Knowledge of these suspicions was in fact confined to a very few people in the security authorities; wider dissemination could presumably have put at risk their investigations. As my reply of 15 November to the hon. Member for Hartlepool made clear, Blunt had no access to classified information and was not a security risk after 1945. It is in any case questionable whether it would have been right to disseminate or act upon suspicions which could not be proved and had been strenuously denied.



The Confession

Q11. What was the nature of the new information that provoked Blunt's confession?

A. This cannot be disclosed.

Q12. Did Blunt confess to recruiting other spies for the Russians or did he name any others whom he knew to be Russian agents?

A. As I have said in my statement, in addition to making his confession, Blunt has co-operated with subsequent interrogations and has provided useful information, which has made it possible to take action to remove some possible security risks. There was, however, nothing which could be used as evidence for the purposes of bringing charges. It would not be in the public interest for me to go into detail on this.

Q13. Was Blunt the "Fourth Man"?

A. Let me put it this way: like Burgess, Maclean and Philby, he was a Russian spy.

Q14. How did this case differ from the case of George Blake, where the evidence against him was based on his confession?

A. Blake's confession was not induced by an offer of immunity from prosecution. There was not thought anything to be gained by such an offer in that case.

Q15. Why was the case of Blunt never referred to the Security Commission?

A. I cannot answer for previous Administrations. But it has to be remembered that Blunt did not confess until 1964, nearly twenty years after he left the Security Service. Security procedures in all the relevant services had already been extensively reviewed and overhauled in the light of the defections of Burgess and Maclean, and later of Philby, and there would have been little point in a further review of events and procedures of twenty years or more earlier. It could also have been considered that a reference to the Security Commission would be likely to frustrate the main objective of granting Blunt immunity and securing a confession: that of getting from him as much information as possible to assist other inquiries with which the Security Service was concerned.

/The overriding



The overriding consideration was the need to discover as much as possible about the extent of RIS penetration. For this Blunt's co-operation was indispensable.

Blunt's Activities

Q16. What kind of material did Blunt pass to the Russians as a member of the Security Service from 1940 to 1945?

A. The information to which Blunt had access in the course of his duties in the Security Service was not such as would, if disclosed to the Russians, have been likely to prejudice British military interests or to have put British lives at risk.

Q17. Was it Blunt's help that enabled Burgess and Maclean to defect before Maclean could be interrogated?

A. No. It was Philby's warning that led Burgess and Maclean to defect when they did, though Blunt assisted in the arrangements through his old contacts with Russian intelligence.

Q18. Did Blunt use information obtained from the Security Service to warn Burgess and Maclean?

A. No. The evidence is that Burgess told Blunt that Maclean was under suspicion.

Q19. Did Blunt help Philby to defect?

A. No.

Q20. When did Blunt cease to be a Russian spy?

A. Blunt has said that he has had no contacts with the Russians since 1956. We have no information to the contrary.

Q21. What criminal offences did Blunt commit?

A. That is not for me to say. Only a Court of Law could decide; and the authorities are constrained from preferring any charges in view of the immunity which was granted.

/ Blunt's Circle



Blunt's Circle

Q22. Did Blunt occupy a flat with Lord Rothschild during the War?

A. He lived during the war with others in a flat of which the lease was held by Lord Rothschild. Lord Rothschild was not himself living in the flat during that period.

Q.23. Did Burgess, the present Lady Rothschild and Lady Llewelyn-Davies share this flat with Blunt?

A. Yes. Both Lady Rothschild and Lady Llewelyn-Davies have given the security authorities an account of their acquaintance with Blunt and Burgess, and have co-operated fully in investigations.

The Fifth Man

Q24. Does the Government accept the identification of the "Fifth Man" suggested in Boyle's book?

A. We have no evidence to support any allegation that Dr. Wilfred Mann behaved as "Basil" is said to have done, and we have no reason to doubt the truth of Dr. Mann's reported statement to the Press that the allegation is without foundation.

Q25. Is it true that a senior British Government official stationed in Washington, having spied for the Russians, was detected by the CIA and "turned" by them into a double agent for the CIA, without the knowledge of the British authorities?

A. No. We are satisfied that there is no truth in any part of this allegation.

Q26. Have the United States authorities been consulted about the allegations about "Basil" [the Fifth man]?

A. In such matters we do not comment on our exchanges with foreign authorities.



H. R.

CLIVE

New Questions in  
today's Order Paper

WEDNESDAY 21 NOVEMBER 1979

out of  
order!

Mr. Robin F. Cook: To ask the Prime Minister, if she will list the security and intelligence services and persons in support of them, and the terms of reference of any such bodies. (PW)

MJ  
20/x1

Mr. Robin F. Cook: To ask the Prime Minister, whether in the light of Clause 14(1) of the Protection of Official Information Bill (Lords), she will now answer questions on the security and intelligence services. (PW)

Mr. Robin Maxwell-Hyslop: To ask the Prime Minister, whether Mr. Anthony Blunt is in receipt of any pension from public funds, in respect of his public services. (PW)

Mr. Michael Meacher: To ask the Prime Minister, how many persons were questioned as a result of suspicions aroused in the light of the Burgess-Maclean affair; how many of these worked in the Civil Service; what action was taken as a result of these questionings; and how many persons were asked to leave the Civil Service. (PW)

Mr. Michael Meacher: To ask the Prime Minister, if she will publish the guidelines currently operated by the security services in respect of their relations with Ministers. (PW)

Mr. Tony Marlow: To ask the Prime Minister, what is the policy with regard to the employment of homosexuals within the security services. (W)

THURSDAY 22 NOVEMBER 1979

Mr. Arthur Lewis: To ask the Prime Minister, whether it was on her instructions that the Cabinet Office gave prior information to the solicitors of Mr. Blunt of her intention of making a statement concerning his confession of being a spy; in how many cases in the past such action has been taken; why it was done in this case; and whether she will make a statement. (ORAL)

Mr. Michael Meacher: To ask the Prime Minister, if she will take steps to ensure that deals proposed by the security services with persons suspected of grave security offences or any similar matters are in future brought to her personal attention for her own decision. (PW)

/CONTD.



15. 13.  
Mr. Michael Meacher: To ask the Prime Minister, in how many other cases in the last 20 years deals have been made by the security services, as in the Blunt affair.

Mr. Arthur Lewis: To ask the Minister for the Civil Service, whether he will publish a detailed list of the Civil Service and Government appointments held by Mr. Anthony Blunt, his salary and/or grading; what pension rights have been or are being paid; and whether he will publish the total of public funds paid to him.



BERNARD INGHAM

PA

MS

Mr Blunt's solicitor requested an interview to enable him to satisfy himself and his client that there was nothing in Mr Blunt's proposed statement that would be prejudicial to national security. The Prime Minister agreed that I should see Mr Rubinstein on that basis. The interview took place at 11.45 am yesterday.

Mr Rubinstein was told that there was nothing in the proposed statement that we should regard as prejudicial to national security. No deletions were asked for or suggested. Some minor changes of wording were suggested for consideration, in the interests of clarity or accuracy.

[It is quite untrue that I asked for the deletion of reference to a 'Fifth Man': there was no such reference in the statement.]

Mr Rubinstein described the arrangements for issuing the statement and for subsequent questioning of Mr Blunt. Speaking purely personally, I said that, though it was none of my business, I thought that they would find that the arrangements were felt to be excessively restrictive. [In fact I suggested that, if it was felt that Mr Blunt's health would not stand a full press conference, he should at least add somebody from PA to The Times team.]

RFA

20 November 1979



# LOBBY BRIEFING

time: 11.00 date: 19/11/79

## PRIME MINISTER'S ENGAGEMENTS

The Prime Minister is working at No 10 this morning. She meets President Giscard (Kensington Palace helipad) at 1225. Fourth in annual Summit series, last one in UK: Chequers, December 1977. Programme: small working lunch No 10; tete-a-tete; enlarged session 1600 (including Foreign Secretary, Lord President of Council, M. Francois Poncet and M. Monory). M. Barre, French Prime Minister, not attending because of urgent Parliamentary business. Dinner at Downing Street this evening. Briefing at No 12 Downing Street at 1800.

## BLUNT

Points on Blunt included:

- i HMG will probably offer to initiate a Debate on Wednesday in HMG time. PM to open, Attorney General probably to wind-up. Business statement later today should clarify.
- ii Written PQs on Order Paper for PM tomorrow: Answers not likely to be as substantial as last Thursday's.
- iii On Blunt's allegation that statement broke guarantee to him about no publicity, we said that no Government could give such a guarantee. It was a nonsense given a free press. The only guarantee from HMG could be about immunity. The statement was a result of the enormous build-up of speculation about him.
- iv Inquiry: We did not guide the Lobby to expect an inquiry. We realised that last week's statement would produce an enormous number of questions. We were now following through in measured stages. We expected that there would be substantial debate in the H/C which would clarify the major issues. We would then take stock. We had no taste to blacken the dead. It all happened many years ago. It was now more important that the PM should be convinced she knows precisely what is going on and she had been putting herself in that position. We did not want to suffer from the omissions or failures of the past. We did not know if the PM would be seeing Mr Callaghan before the Debate. We thought that previous PMs may in fact want to speak in the Debate.  
On the suggestion of an inquiry into procedures, we said that such an inquiry would not be in public; and we suggested that the PM could ~~(satisfy)~~ without an inquiry.
- v Blunt's statement and press conference: We revealed that Blunt's solicitor had asked for a meeting with the Cabinet Secretary which was taking place this morning. We would not be vetting his statement but we would obviously be indicating any elements that might prejudice security. It was obviously hypothetical to speculate about whether or not he might be charged under the OSA if he said anything.
- vi We thought the proposition that the PM could be told "without being told" was very interesting; but we rejected the idea that if the Private Secretary was told the information necessarily became the property of the PM.
- vii On Young and the OSA, we commented that we were surprised how many people have been talking.
- viii We offered no guidance on whether any more names would be revealed officially.

.../....



- 2 -

- ix We re-emphasised that the PM had been taking a close interest in security since her appointment and reminded the Lobby that she knew about Blunt some time during the summer. Civil servants did not need telling that they would be dismissed if they didn't tell her about matters such as this.
- x [Protection of Information Bill: The Lobby didn't ask: if/when they do we could say that the question if/when/how the Home Office proceeds with the Bill is obviously now part of present discussion and is being considered.]

#### PRESS CONFERENCES

We reminded the Lobby about the Northern Ireland Lobby briefing and the Giscard press conference both at 11.00 tomorrow.

#### PAY FOR COUNCILLORS

There is no truth whatever in the story in the 'Daily Star' that Councillors are to be paid £20 a week salaries. The Government's proposals on Councillors' remuneration will be announced when the Local Government Planning and Land Bill is published - probably within two weeks.

[For your information: There will be no salary for Councillors, only slightly increased allowances.]



For Answer Monday 19/11

2170

Notices of Questions and Motions: 14th November 1979 No. 66

- 80 **Mr Michael Grylls** (North West Surrey): To ask Lord Privy Seal, how many small  
W businesses feature on the approved list of suppliers maintained by his department for  
purchase contracts by means of selective tender.
- 81 **Mr Dafydd Wigley** (Caernarvon): To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment,  
W what response he has now received to his consultation document on local government  
capital expenditure controls, to which comments were invited by 17th November.
- 82 **Mr Ronald Leighton** (Newham North East): To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries  
W and Food, what is his estimate of increase of refunds on exports of butter fats by the  
EEC during 1979.
- 83 **Mr Ronald Leighton** (Newham North East): To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries  
W and Food, what is his estimate of change in quantities of milk and milk products taken  
into intervention in 1979 in the EEC.
- 84 **Mr David Alton** (Liverpool, Edge Hill): To ask the Minister of Transport, whether the  
W Leitch Committee's recommendations are to be retrospective.
- 85 **Mr David Alton** (Liverpool, Edge Hill): To ask the Minister of Transport, whether the  
W methodology of traffic prediction incorporated in the Red Book is to be regarded as  
Government policy.
- 86 **Mr David Alton** (Liverpool, Edge Hill): To ask the Minister of Transport, if he is  
W satisfied that there is sufficient opportunity for independent scrutiny in the process of traffic  
prediction.
- 87 **Mr Ronald Leighton** (Newham North East): To ask the Lord Privy Seal, what is the  
W status of the European Council under the treaties establishing the European Communities;  
and what powers it exercises in relation to requests to the EEC Commission for research  
and secretarial services.
- 88 **Miss Joan Lester** (Eton and Slough): To ask the Lord Privy Seal, when he expects to  
W reach a decision on whether or not to approve an ambassador to Chile.
- 89 **Mr Robert Edwards** (Wolverhampton South East): To ask the Secretary of State for  
W Industry, if employees of the British Steel Corporation at Bilston, who have been made  
redundant or are about to be made redundant, will receive assistance from the European  
Coal and Steel Community funds allocated to help employees affected by the closure or  
slimming down of plants in the steel industry.
- 90 **Mr Dennis Skinner** (Bolsover): To ask Mr Attorney General, if he will refer to the  
W Director of Public Prosecutions with a view to prosecution for breaches of the Official  
Secrets Act the conduct of Sir Anthony Blunt in connection with the defection of Burgess  
and McLean.
- 91 **Mrs Renée Short** (Wolverhampton North East): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home  
W Department, when he expects to receive the report of the Chief Constable of Merseyside  
concerning his investigations into the events surrounding the death of Mr Jimmy Kelly in  
Merseyside.
- 92 **Mrs Renée Short** (Wolverhampton North East): To ask the Secretary of State for Industry,  
W if he will take steps to ensure the continuance of trade union representation on the Board  
of the Post Office after 31st December.
- 93 **Mrs Renée Short** (Wolverhampton North East): To ask the Secretary of State for Industry,  
W when he expects to receive the report on the management of the Post Office Corporation  
by the Industrial Relations Unit of Warwick University; and whether the report will be  
published in full.



- 108 **Mr Richard Wainwright** (Colne Valley): To ask the Secretary of State for Social Services,  
W whether he has any plans to introduce legislation governing the level of noise at discothèques.
- 109 **Mr William Ross** (Londonderry): To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland,  
W if he is now able to state how many armed men were seen in Carrickmore, Co. Tyrone and its immediate area on 17th October.
- 110 **Mr William Ross** (Londonderry): To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland,  
W if he will list the weapons used by the Irish Republican Army gang in Carrickmore, Co. Tyrone on 17th October.
- 111 **Mr Dafydd Thomas** (Merioneth): To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what proportion  
W of the finance of the Development Board for Rural Wales for 1976-77, 1977-78 and 1978-79, respectively, has been expended in Newtown as part of the on-going Mid-Wales Corporation's committed expenditure; and how much was spent in the rest of the board's area for the same period.
- 112 **Mr Dafydd Thomas** (Merioneth): To ask the Secretary of State for Industry, what is the  
W total saving gained through the reduction and withdrawal of regional development incentives in Powys, Ceredigion and Merioneth.
- 113 **Mr Dafydd Thomas** (Merioneth): To ask the Secretary of State for Industry, what additional  
W public expenditure is to be made available to replace savings made by the Government through the withdrawal of regional development incentives in the Development Board for Rural Wales area.
- 114 **Mr Christopher Price** (Lewisham West): To ask Mr Attorney General, if he will refer to  
W the Director of Public Prosecutions the case of Sir Anthony Blunt, with a view to prosecution under the Official Secrets Acts in respect of the Burgess and Maclean case.
- 115 **Mrs Renée Short** (Wolverhampton North East): To ask the Secretary of State for Employ-  
W ment, what the numbers of registered unemployed men, women, boys and girls were in the Wolverhampton Employment Exchange area at the latest date; and how this compares with the corresponding period in 1978.
- 116 **Mr Gerald Kaufman** (Manchester, Ardwick): To ask the Secretary of State for Industry,  
W if he will place in the Library a copy of the Warwick University report on the industrial democracy experiment in the Post Office.

## TUESDAY 20th NOVEMBER

- 117 **Mr Jack Dunnett** (Nottingham East): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Depart-  
W ment, whether, having regard to the likely lack of fire protection cover which would result from the closing of the Dunkirk Fire Station in Nottingham, he will, under the Fire Services Acts, call for a local inquiry prior to permitting the phasing-out of this station.
- 118 **Mr Dafydd Wigley** (Caernarvon): To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment, if  
W he will publish a table indicating the cash limits for each local authority in Wales for the year 1980-81.
- 119 **Mr David Crouch** (Canterbury): To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Science,  
W if he will take steps to amend the regulations governing local education authority awards with a view to correcting the anomaly whereby children of British parents working in Brussels are not entitled to be considered for a higher education grant.
- 120 **Mrs Renée Short** (Wolverhampton North East): To ask the Secretary of State for Education  
W and Science, when he expects to make an announcement concerning the construction of the new British Library building at St. Pancras; whether he will take steps to ensure that the work will begin in 1979; and what the cost of the building is likely to be.



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PRIME MINISTER

ANTHONY BLUNT

When I saw Mr. Callaghan this evening to show him certain papers relating to the Blunt case which dated from his period as Prime Minister, he told me that he thought that the two main issues on which the debate on Wednesday would focus were:-

(a) the extent to which the affair was a case of the Establishment looking after its own. He drew attention to the comparisons which the Press had been drawing between the treatment of Blunt and that given to spies like Vassall and Bingham;

(b) the charge that there was within Government institutions which were separate from and not responsible to the elected representatives of the people.

He thought that if you announced in your speech on Wednesday that there was to be an inquiry, which might be conducted by Lord Diplock and a Privy Counsellor from each side of the House, this would take a lot of steam out of the controversy. In his view, such an inquiry should keep off the details of the Blunt case as such and concentrate on the channels of communication between the Prime Minister and other Ministers on the one hand and the security services on the other. Even though the results of such an inquiry could be revealed publicly only in general terms, they would help to reassure the public that political control over the security services did exist and was being properly exercised. He added that he thought such an inquiry might usefully look also at the correctness of the legal advice which was given to and by the Law Officers in 1964.

He said that the Government should announce in Wednesday's debate that it was withdrawing the Protection of Information Bill

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until the Blunt inquiry was over and its findings could be considered in relation to future policy on the disclosure of official information.

Finally, Mr. Callaghan repeated the offer which he had made to the Leader of the House on Friday that he would be very happy to see you before Wednesday's debate if you so wished.

While Mr. Callaghan plainly has his own position to protect in all this, I think that he genuinely wants to be helpful if he can. I think that he would value it if you were ready to see him when you have made up your own mind <sup>about</sup> what you propose to say in the debate and in particular what you want to do about an inquiry. Do you wish to see him?

ful.

19 November 1979

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LOR.



10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

19 November 1979

PROFESSOR ANTHONY BLUNT

When the Prime Minister saw the Home Secretary, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, the Attorney General and Sir Robert Armstrong at 2000 last night to discuss the further handling of the Blunt case, they concluded that the Government should offer a full day's debate on the affair on Wednesday of this week. The pressure for a debate was now very considerable, and it was desirable that the Government should retain the Parliamentary initiative which it had seized when the Prime Minister had given her very full reply to Mr. Leadbitter's Question last Thursday. The offer of a debate in Government time would pre-empt Mr. Hamilton's application for an SO 9 debate on which the Speaker would announce his decision the following day. The case for having a full day's debate rather than only half a day's debate was that it was unlikely that all those who would want to speak, including former Prime Ministers, former Home Secretaries and former Attorneys General, would be able to do so if the debate lasted no more than three hours. The Prime Minister would open the debate and the Attorney General wind up. It would be preferable if Professor Blunt gave the press conference which he was proposing to hold before the debate, and it was agreed that Sir Robert Armstrong should see whether there was any prospect of the press conference being held on Tuesday, when he saw Professor Blunt's solicitor, Mr. Rubinstein, the following day about the statement which Professor Blunt was proposing to issue.

The meeting also considered whether the Government should announce its intention to hold an inquiry into the Blunt case. There was general agreement that there were major disadvantages in having an inquiry. Many of the people concerned with the case were now dead, and it was in the nature of security matters that relatively little was recorded in writing. Moreover, any inquiry would have to be held in private and so might be unable to satisfy Parliament and the press that the questions which they had been asking had been properly considered and answered.

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Finally, any inquiry was likely to encourage attacks on the security services, whose confidence would probably be seriously undermined. On the other hand, the pressure for an inquiry of some form was likely to go on growing, even if a full-scale debate took place, and we should probably find that there would be further revelations and allegations made in the press over the coming days and weeks which would reinforce the demand for some kind of investigation. The Government should therefore be ready to agree to establish an inquiry. In that event the investigation might best be conducted by Lord Diplock sitting alone. Such an inquiry would have to be held in secret and its report submitted to the Prime Minister. The Government would then have to decide what should be made public. But before final decisions were taken, the Home Secretary and the Attorney General should together consider further what form an inquiry might take and what its scope might be. The Prime Minister asked the Home Secretary to seek the views of the Lord Chancellor on the need for a debate and for an inquiry.

I am sending copies of this letter to George Walden (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Bill Beckett (Law Officers' Department) and Martin Vile (Cabinet Office).

CAW

J.A. Chilcot, Esq.,  
Home Office.

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Prime Minister  
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19.11.

MR. WHITMORE

Blunt

As agreed I received Professor Blunt's Legal Adviser at his request this morning at 11.45. The purpose of the interview was to enable the Legal Adviser to satisfy himself and his client that a statement which Professor Blunt proposed to make contained nothing which would be prejudicial to national security. I made it clear at the outset that there was no question of my asking or insisting upon changes in the draft statement: I would indicate if I saw any matters that might be prejudicial to national security and it would then be up to Professor Blunt and his Legal Adviser what they should do about it.

2. I attach a copy of the draft statement, as it emerged from our discussion. This incorporates a number of changes that Mr. Rubinstein said he proposed to put to his client; and expected him to accept them.

3. Professor Blunt is proposing to issue this statement on the afternoon of Tuesday, 20th November, embargoed for 5.00 pm. The present intention is that he should read the statement over to BBC and ITN and then answer questions from those two separately, for 10 minutes each. He will then meet two journalists from The Times (Mr. Louis Heren and Mr. Stewart Tandler) for 10 minutes and answer their questions. Mr. Rubinstein said that Professor Blunt did not propose to hold a full Press conference; I had the impression that he doubted whether Professor Blunt could take that. The arrangement with The Times would be that it would make the text of the questions and answers available to the rest of the Press. I said, speaking purely personally, that I thought that Professor Blunt and Mr. Rubinstein should reckon with the fact that, if the broadcasting organisations and The Times were given opportunities to question Professor Blunt and the rest of the Press was not given similar opportunities, the reaction of the rest of the Press to his statement might be less sympathetic than it might otherwise have been. Mr. Rubinstein took the point and obviously was impressed by the argument. He remained doubtful





whether Professor Blunt could cope with a full Press conference, but he promised to consider whether a representative of the Press Association might join the two journalists from The Times for the purposes of the interview.

4. Mr. Rubinstein asked whether we should wish to see the transcript of the questions and answers before they were circulated to the rest of the Press, so as to ensure that they contained nothing prejudicial to national security. I said that I should not wish to do that. I had responded to his request that we should see the statement, but I did not wish there to be any impression that Professor Blunt was in some way under licence from the Government. He had indicated that he accepted that he was constrained by the Official Secrets Act, and I was entirely content to leave it at that.

5. I think that the statement is helpful rather than otherwise. It does not say in terms that Professor Blunt regrets what he did; but it does indicate that he had come to feel a degree of contrition about it, and was relieved when the constraints of personal loyalty and fear of prosecution were removed and he was able to speak freely to the authorities.

(Robert Armstrong)

19th November 1979



1970-1971

(Mentioned in the report)

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In the mid-nineteen thirties it seemed to me and to many of my contemporaries that the Communist Party and Russia constituted the only firm bulwark against Fascism, since the Western democracies were taking an uncertain and compromising attitude towards Germany. I was persuaded by Guy Burgess that I could best serve the cause of anti-Fascism by joining him in his work for the Russians. This was a case of political conscience against loyalty to country: I chose conscience.

When later I realised the true facts about Russia, I was prevented from taking any action by personal loyalty; I could not denounce my friends. In 1964 an event took place which meant that I was no longer bound by this loyalty, and, being promised immunity, I felt free - and was indeed relieved - to give the authorities all the information in my possession.

From 1945 I ceased to pass any information to the Russians, but in 1951 I was in contact with them on behalf of Burgess, I was also pressed to go to Russia. I refused.

Andrew Boyle has stated that I obtained from a former colleague in MI5 the exact date on which Maclean was to be interviewed. There is no truth in this story. I had no contacts with MI5 between 1945 and 1951, and I had no information from any other source as a result of which I might have tipped off Maclean; and I did not in fact do so.

In 1945 I went back to my normal academic work and was also appointed Surveyor of The King's Pictures. I did not apply for or seek this appointment, but I was pressed to allow my name to be put forward, and, when offered it, accepted on the grounds that I knew there was much work to be done on the collection and that I believed I could do it. I resigned from this post in 1972 on the grounds that I felt I had done what I could for the collection, which was in effect being looked after by my Deputy, Sir Oliver Millar; but I was asked to stay on as Adviser for The Queen's Pictures and Drawings.

In 1956 The Queen honoured me with a knighthood. It has been said that I "accepted" the knighthood. In fact, as a member of the Royal Household, I was not told in advance and the first that I knew of the matter was reading the announcement in The Times. When Mr. Michael Rubinstein told me that The Queen was going to strip me of my knighthood I immediately wrote to the proper authority offering to resign it, but presumably the letter did not arrive before the announcement was made.





When I was told of the impending statement by Mrs. Thatcher, I did not at any time contemplate leaving the country but I realised that there would inevitably be a barrage of enquiries from the Press while questions were being asked in Parliament. I knew that I could not give helpful answers to questions which might be put to me so long as I was unaware exactly what the Ministerial answers would be. I should add that I remained - as I still remain - under the constraint of the Official Secrets Act.

I am encouraged by the letters from my former students and by messages from colleagues and friends to hope that I shall be able to resume my work as an art-historian.

November 1979



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No copies.

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MR. WHITMORE

Sir Robert Armstrong spoke with the Prime Minister at 11.30 a.m. on Sunday. Sir Robert Armstrong said that Peter Rawlinson had been asked by the BBC to appear on Panorama with Robin Day. The Prime Minister's first reaction was certainly not. Robert Armstrong said that he would want to say that the decision to offer immunity to Blunt was not an unreasonable one, given that, it would be nonsense then to alert and disturb other moles by dismissing him and stripping him of his honours. The Prime Minister was worried that he would only be able to say that. If he did an interview he could do it from his home with an outside broadcast unit, on an understanding with Day that he would say only those two things. The Prime Minister wished all the birdies would stop singing. Sir Robert Armstrong asked if Clive had told the Prime Minister about the incident at Charing Cross Hospital concerning Goronwy Rees. The Prime Minister had not heard and Sir Robert Armstrong explained it to her. The Prime Minister was alarmed and astonished. She wondered if it could be coincidental. She was afraid that the story would break to the press..

G. Baldwin, Duty Clerk.

18 November 1979



MR. WHITMORE

I attach notes for the Prime Minister's speech in any Parliamentary debate there may be on the Blunt affair. They are, I know, too long; but they may serve as a quarry from which she can draw the material she needs.

If the Prime Minister agrees, I should like to circulate copies of the draft for comments tomorrow morning to those whose comments will be needed.

Robert Armstrong

18 November 1979



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LOR



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

19 November 1979

Dear John,

PROFESSOR ANTHONY BLUNT

The Prime Minister discussed the Blunt case further with the Home Secretary, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and the Chief Whip at 1045 this morning.

They confirmed the decision which had been taken the previous evening to have a full day's debate on Wednesday of this week. The debate would be on the Motion "to discuss the case of Professor Anthony Blunt on the Adjournment". It was agreed that the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster should let the Speaker know of the Government's readiness to have a debate on Wednesday and then make a statement announcing revised business for the week later in the day.

I am sending copies of this letter to George Walden (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), John Stevens (Office of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster), Bill Beckett (Law Officers' Department), Murdo Maclean (Chief Whip's Office) and Martin Vile (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely,

John White

J. A. Chilcot, Esq.,  
Home Office.

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PRIME MINISTER

cc. Mr. Whitmore ✓  
Mr. Vile (Cabinet Office)

Debate on Blunt

The Chancellor of the Duchy announced that there would be a day's debate on the case of Anthony Blunt, on a Motion for the Adjournment, on Wednesday.

Mr. Foot said that it was right to re-arrange the Business in this way. He asked for a further discussion through the usual channels about the Business at the beginning of next week - when the Opposition would like to have two days in succession on the economic situation, one of them a Government day and the second their postponed Supply Day.

Mr. Beith called on the Government to suspend all proceedings on the Protection of Information Bill, which he said should be retitled the Protection of Incompetence and Cover-Up of Treason Bill. Mr. St. John-Stevas congratulated him on his lurid phrase-making and said that the Bill was clearly relevant to Wednesday's debate.

Mr. Hamilton said that the debate on Wednesday should be extended until 11 or 12 and that it was essential that Members should be able to discuss the Protection of Information Bill. The Leader of the House said that he did not think there was a case for extending the debate beyond 10 o'clock, and that it was for the Speaker to determine what was in order. Mr. Alex Lyon congratulated the Government on diverting attention from its economic measures. The Leader of the House said that he was grateful for the compliment.

Mr. Michael English asked for early passage of the Motions on Select Committees, which were blocked by John Farr on Friday. Rumour has it that there will be a concerted attempt to put the Blunt case on the agenda for the Home Affairs Select Committee, and I will seek advice from the Leader of the House about this.

/ Mr. Leadbitter



Mr. Leadbitter said that he was grateful to the Government for responding so quickly to the call for a debate. He wanted Ministers to indicate on Wednesday whether there would be a full inquiry. The Chancellor of the Duchy said that you had been more open and responsive than any of your predecessors in this matter. Mr. Callaghan invited him to withdraw that statement, and Mr. St. John-Stevas said that he was praising the present Prime Minister and not condemning any of her predecessors.

Mr. Price said that it would be intolerable if the scope of the debate proved to be limited to the trivial aspects of the case. We needed to discuss the proper control of the security services and it should be clear in advance that the House could discuss every aspect of the case. Mr. St. John-Stevas said that it seemed to him to be possible to raise all sorts of aspects within the rules of order and that the House normally treated these subjects very seriously.

Mr. Robin Cook said that the Protection of Official Information Bill had been deeply discredited by the events of the last few days. Mr. Skinner said that the Prime Minister should disclose fully why she had turned into a "common or garden nark in tipping off Anthony Blunt". Mr. Cryer said that the Home Secretary should take part in the debate and give his views on the Information Bill; and that the Home Secretary or Prime Minister should tell the House the form of inquiry which had been decided.

The Leader of the House said that these points should wait for the debate itself and that he understood that the speakers would be the Prime Minister and the Attorney General.

Finally, the Speaker clarified the position about the topics which would be in order by referring to Standing Order 16, which - paraphrased - says that the Speaker may permit reference to legislative action in a Debate on the Adjournment notwithstanding the practice of the House which forbids this. He hinted heavily that he would not stand in the way of discussion of the Official Information Bill on Wednesday.

**N. J. SANDERS**



Mr. Speaker, the statement that I made about the case of Professor Blunt on 15 November in reply to the Hon. Gentleman the Member for the Hartlepoons was a very full one - unusually so, if I may be allowed to say so, for a statement on security matters. I make no apology for that. As events had turned out, I thought that the House was entitled to as full an account of the matter as I could give. That means that, for various reasons which will become clear in the course of my speech this evening, there is not a lot which I can add to that account. I hope, however, to deal with some of the questions to which it has given rise.

2. Some here said that I should have chosen to give my account as an oral statement. The fact was that the Hon. Gentleman had put down a Question for Priority Written Answer. I had no wish to duck or postpone an answer. As the House will recall, we had important statements from the Despatch Box on Wednesday and Tuesday last week. Moreover what I had to say on the Blunt case was long and detailed, and perhaps easier for Hon. Members to apprehend from a written text than from an oral statement. In the circumstances it seemed to me that I should not be lacking in courtesy or respect to the House if I gave my statement as a Written Answer to the Hon. Gentleman's Question. I was of course well aware that Hon. Members would have plenty of opportunities to ask me supplementary questions, either on the Order Paper, or when I answer Oral Questions, or in a debate, if one were to be arranged.



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3. As I said in my answer, Professor Blunt admitted that he had been recruited by Russian Intelligence when he was a don at Cambridge before the war. Only he could tell us why he allowed himself to be recruited, and I do not propose to take the time of the House in speculating about the reasons: that would take us deep into questions of psychology and social history. As we know, he was not the only man of that generation at Cambridge who not only avowed Marxist views but also persuaded himself or was persuaded to become an agent of Russian intelligence.

4. Then in 1940 he joined the Security Service. To us today it seems extraordinary that a man who had made no secret of his Marxist beliefs could have been accepted for secret work in any part of the public service, let alone the Security Service. But that is with the benefit of hindsight. Perhaps it was easier then than now to believe that the espousal of the Marxist interpretation of history and society need not be inconsistent with loyalty to one's country. Perhaps, too, standards were, misguidedly, relaxed at a time of considerable expansion and recruitment to deal with the wartime tasks of the Service.

5. For us today, the important question is: could it happen now? We have learned a great deal since 1940; and procedures are very different today. As the House knows, the positive vetting procedure was introduced after the war, by the Labour Government of the day. The Security Service quite rightly exercises the most special degree of care both in its arrangements for recruitment and in its vetting procedures. One learns not to use the word "never" in politics;

/ but I can



But I can say with confidence that I do not believe that any one who shared what we now know to have been Professor Blunt's political views and personal tendencies could be appointed to any post requiring regular access to classified information in any part of the public service, let alone to the Security Service.

6. During his period in the Security Service, from 1940 to 1948<sup>5</sup>, Professor Blunt has said that he regularly passed to Russian intelligence anything that came his way which would be of interest to them. We do not know, of course, exactly what information he passed; we do know, however, to what information he had access by virtue of his duties. British interests must have been seriously damaged by his activities. But ~~it~~<sup>it</sup> is perhaps of some comfort to think - though it in no way excuses his conduct - that it is very unlikely that British military operations or British lives were put at risk. And I can assure the House that the story that he put the lives of Dutch secret agents at risk is without foundation; he was never in the Special Operations Executive. That was a straight case of mistaken identity.

7. From the time when he left the Security Service in 1945 and resumed his career as an art historian, Professor Blunt ceased to have access to classified information and ceased to be a current security risk. He has said that he engaged in no activity with or for Russian intelligence on his own account, between 1945 and 1951, though he had occasional meetings with Russian intelligence officers between 1945 and 1947, when he acted as a courier for Burgess. We have no reason to disbelieve these statements.



8. In May 1951 an investigation which had continued for some years at last caught up with Donald Maclean. We believe that it was Philby who warned Burgess to tell Maclean that he was about to be interrogated; and that Burgess used Blunt, a friend of long standing as well as a fellow agent, as a contact with a Soviet controller to assist in the arrangements for Maclean's flight to Russia - a journey in which Burgess eventually joined him. On one occasion between 1951 and 1956, he assisted Philby in contacting the Russian intelligence. He has said that he has had no contact with Russian intelligence since then; we have no reason to disbelieve him.

9. The defection of Burgess and Maclean led to the initiation of intense, wide-ranging and prolonged investigations of the extent to which the security and other public services had been penetrated by Russian intelligence - investigations which continue to this day. At an early stage in these investigations Professor Blunt came under inquiry, as a result of information to the effect that Burgess had been heard in 1937 to say that he was working for a secret branch of the Comintern and that Blunt was one of his sources. Blunt denied this, adding that he had understood that Burgess was an agent of British intelligence, and in that belief had given him some assistance. Nevertheless Blunt remained under suspicion, and became the subject of intense investigation. As I said in my answer to the Hon. Member for the Hartlepoons, he was interviewed on eleven occasions. He persisted in his denial, and no evidence against him was obtained.



10. It was in March 1964 that new information was received which directly implicated Blunt. I cannot disclose the nature of that information; I can, however, say that it was not useable as evidence on which to base a prosecution. In this situation the security authorities were faced with a difficult choice:

- (1) they could do nothing, and hope that further information would in due course be discovered to corroborate what they had received;
- (2) they could confront Professor Blunt with the new information, to see if it would break his denial;
- (3) they could hope to secure not merely an admission of his own involvement but also his co-operation in their continuing investigations, by confronting him with the new information and offering him an immunity from prosecution.

11. As to the first course, the security authorities had already pursued their inquiries for thirteen years without obtaining firm evidence to justify their suspicions of Blunt: there was no reason to expect or hope that a further wait would be likely to yield evidence of a kind which had eluded them so far.

12. As to the second course, Blunt had persisted in his denial at eleven interviews; there was no reason to suppose that he would do otherwise at a twelfth. If the security authorities confronted him with the new information, and he persisted in his



denial, their investigation of him would be no further forward and they would be at risk of prejudicing other inquiries.

13. So they decided to ask the Attorney General, through the acting Director of Public Prosecutions, to authorise them to offer Blunt immunity from prosecution, if he confessed and agreed to co-operate in their further investigations.

14. There is of course nothing unprecedented about a request to the Attorney General for authority to offer immunity from prosecution in exchange for co-operation in the pursuit of another inquiry. It can and does happen, not infrequently, in the course of continued investigations. The decision is one which, under our constitutional arrangements, is taken by the Attorney General in his capacity as a Law Officer, not as a member of the Government. The decision must be based on a balance of the public interest, and he may consult his colleagues, if he thinks it desirable to do so, as to the various, usually conflicting, considerations of public interest which arise. But he need not do so; and, if he does do so, he is not bound by their advice or views: the decision is his alone.

15. In this case the then Attorney General decided that it was in the public interest to offer an immunity from prosecution.

X { His reasons for so deciding were not recorded; but } whether or not with the benefit of hindsight one agrees that it was the right decision, it was a decision he was entitled to take, and I think it can fairly be claimed that it was not in the circumstances an unreasonable or irresponsible decision. Prosecution was not

/ then



then and seemed unlikely to become, an available alternative; confrontation without an immunity was unlikely to produce a confession or willingness to co-operate in further inquiries; and to do nothing at all with the new information, after in effect waiting for thirteen years to get it, cannot have seemed an attractive prospect.

16. So the offer of immunity was made; Professor Blunt confessed; and both at the time and subsequently has co-operated in the inquiries of the security authorities.

17. The Queen's Private Secretary was told that Professor Blunt had confessed to having been an agent of Russian intelligence. Blunt was not required to resign his appointment in the Royal Household, and he retained the Knighthood in the Victoria Order which had been conferred on him. It has been suggested that this was a wrong decision, but I do not think that, viewed in the circumstances of the time, it was an unreasonable decision to have taken: it would have made little sense to secure Blunt's co-operation in continuing inquiries by offering him immunity from prosecution, and then, by dismissing him from his post and stripping him of his honour, not only to put that co-operation at risk, but also to prejudice other inquiries by alerting his former controllers and other subjects still under investigation to the fact that he had confessed and could well be giving information.

18. If the matter had been put to the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary of the day, they might well have approved that decision, and I do not think that they would have been wrong to do so. But -

/ and here I



and here I come to what is for me the most inexplicable aspect of the whole affair - it appears that the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary were not informed either that he was to be offered immunity or that, as a result of the offer, Blunt was revealed as a self-confessed spy. What is more, as far as we know, the Attorney General was not told of Blunt's confession.

19. As I say, I find it very difficult to account for this. I do not suppose that we shall ever get to the bottom of it. I can assure the House that there are no records which throw any light on the matter. Of course in dealing with security matters many matters are, quite rightly, not put in writing; and of course <sup>some of</sup> those principally concerned are dead. But there is nothing in the record which remotely suggests that there was a deliberate decision to hide the facts from Ministers. Such a decision, if taken for discreditable reasons, would have entailed in effect a conspiracy, because there were of course a number of people who knew. Those who knew Sir John Hobson, as I did myself, know him to have been a scrupulous and honourable man: it is not credible that he should have lent himself to a plot to keep information from his Prime Minister. Moreover a decision by the head of the Security Service to pursue a policy of deliberate concealment for discreditable reasons would have been incredibly foolish, because a moment's thought would have been enough to show that it would be bound to come out sooner or later, and perhaps quite soon.



20. It was not as if Ministers were uninterested in these matters. The defection of Philby had revived interest in the investigations which began after the defection of Burgess and Maclean. It is on the record that the Prime Minister, the Home Secretary and the Attorney General were among those present at a meeting very early in 1964, before the information implicating Blunt was received, at which they were briefed about the range and progress of the investigations. I understand that Lord Brooke has now said that Blunt's name (though not the decision to offer him immunity) was probably mentioned to him in the course of general conversations with the Director General of the Security Service. If he had been told of the suspicions, what was to be gained by suppressing the fact?

21. So, if one accepts the theory of deliberate and ill-intentioned concealment, one has to accept the hypothesis that those concerned were not only deliberately and dishonestly failing in their duty but were also very foolish. I suppose it is possible; I do not think it is very likely.

22. What other explanation can there be? I suppose that there could have been a judgment but, in order to avoid the risk of compromising Blunt's co-operation, knowledge of his confession should be strictly confined to those who really needed to know, and that did not include Ministers. That would in my view have been an error of judgment, but it would at least be understandable and not dishonourable. Or it could, I suppose, have been muddle: everyone of those concerned might have assumed that someone else would inform Ministers, and for some reason nobody checked to see if it had been done. One could speculate endlessly: I do not believe we shall ever know. All that I can say

/is that,



is that, if it was (as I believe) not a matter of deliberate and ill-intentioned concealment, then it was one of considerable misjudgment or negligence.

23. Once again, the important question for us today is: could the same thing happen today? I can assure the House that all of those concerned have learnt a great deal from the lessons of these events. Procedures both inside the Security Service and in its relations with Ministers have been reviewed and tightened.

24. I understand that since those days successive Prime Ministers have all taken a close interest in their responsibilities for security and for the affairs of the Security Service. Certainly I am doing so myself.

25. The relationship between the Home Secretary of the day and the Security Service has also become much closer: not only does the Home Secretary of course deal personally with all applications for letter or telephone interceptions, whether from the Security Service or the police, but he also receives regular and frequent reports and briefings from the Director General. My understanding is that this was no less true of my Right Hon. Friend's predecessor than it is of himself.

26. The present Director General, most of whose career has of course been spent in another public service, has done a great deal, building on foundations laid by his predecessor, to improve the Service's awareness of the political dimensions of its work, while of course maintaining both its technical efficiency and its tradition of operating strictly within its directive. /I have myself interviewed the

/Director General



Director General again in the last few days, and I believe I can state with assurance that it is exceedingly unlikely that the failure to inform Ministers in 1964 would be repeated today.

27. As I have said, The Queen's Private Secretary was informed in April 1964. It has been suggested that The Queen may not have been informed. Clearly she was not informed by her Prime Minister, if he did not himself know. I cannot say whether she was informed by her Private Secretary, or by subsequent Prime Ministers: I would not ask or expect either The Queen or any of those gentlemen to breach the strict confidence which governs communications between The Queen and her Private Secretaries and between The Queen and her Prime Ministers

*Passage deleted and closed under FOI Exemption.*

*Wayland, 11 March 2014*

28. I understand that successive Prime Ministers and Home Secretaries since October 1964 have all been informed about the position. I have not of course seen the submissions made to my predecessors, not do I know what their reactions were. I am not responsible and will not try to answer for what they did or did not do. If, however, I may speak from my own experience when this was first put to me soon after taking office, one was not being presented with an existing state of affairs, and what one had to consider was whether there was good reason for some change in the circumstances, for instance - which required one to consider taking a different decision from that which, evidently, one's predecessors had taken. It is clear that, for whatever reason, my predecessors chose not to precipitate a denouement. What has led me to take a different decision now has of course been just such a change

/of circumstances:



of circumstances: the publication of Mr. Andrew Boyle's book, and the subsequent naming of Professor Blunt, which has destroyed the potential benefits for continuing investigations and continuing to live with the situation created by the decisions reached in 1964.

29. As I indicated in my statement, the matter has been reviewed by successive Attorneys-General in 1972, June 1974 and June 1979. These reviews were not for the purpose of considering whether to go back on the offer of immunity. That offer had been made on certain conditions which were accepted and honoured, and were by that nature irrevocable. It is not possible to go back on that. The only purpose of the reviews was to consider whether there was any new evidence, not obtained directly from or as a result of the confession, which could be used as a basis for a prosecution without reference to the confession. On every occasion the conclusion has been that there is no such evidence.

30. It has been suggested that I should not have given authority for Professor Blunt's legal adviser to be <sup>named</sup> ~~named~~ the day before <sup>but</sup> ~~but~~ I was going to make the statement I made in answer to the Hon. Member for the Hartlepoons. I do not understand this. Had there been any question of prosecuting Blunt, of course there would have been no advance warning and, come to that, probably no statement either. As it was, since there was no question of prosecution, there was no question of enabling Blunt to escape justice. It was surely a matter of common courtesy and consideration to enable his legal adviser to prepare Professor Blunt, who is now elderly and not in good health, and who has after all co-operated with the security authorities in their inquiries for the last fifteen years, for what would without warning have been an unexpected and severe shock.

/31. It has



1. It has been alleged that Professor Blunt was given an unofficial tip-off, some hours before the official warning to his legal adviser, which enabled him to pack his bags and flee the country. That is of course nonsense, as can be seen from the fact that he has not fled the country and apparently stayed in London until after I had made my statement.

32. Mr. Speaker, the Government has carefully considered the suggestion that there should be some kind of inquiry into all these matters. I understand and respect the reasons for that suggestion. But we do not think it right or necessary to act on it. In coming to this decision we have had three considerations very much in mind:

(1) As I have indicated, in dealing with security many matters are, quite rightly, not committed to writing. As a result, the written records do not provide anything like a complete or balanced picture.

(2) Many of those principally concerned are dead. Others are getting on in years, and over such a long period memories are inevitably fallible and selective.

(3) Because of the nature of the material, the inquiry would have to be held in private, and would be unable to disclose much of the evidence on which its conclusions were based.

33. The main purpose of an inquiry would be to apply an independent and judicious mind or set of minds to two questions:

/(1) Have the



(1) Have the investigations into Russian intelligence penetration of our public services been as thorough and as effective as we should wish them to be?

(2) Have the necessary changes been made, so as to safeguard against repetitions of what went wrong?

34. I have myself received reports of the investigations that were started after the defection of Burgess and Maclean and have continued ever since. I can assure the House that they have indeed been extremely thorough. They have looked into the position of a considerable number of people. Of those who have been looked at, some are dead, and many others have left the public service, either on or before retirement. Those few who after so many years, still remain in the public service have all been cleared. There is nobody remaining in the public service who is still under suspicion. Of course it is not absolutely impossible even now that some information may in the future come to light which implicates someone who has not so far been or is not now under suspicion; but it is by now very unlikely, and I do not believe that the only sort of inquiry that would be possible would make it any more likely.

35. Clearly the Security Service remains an attractive target for Soviet penetration. The Service is very conscious of that: indeed, in the light of all that has happened it is desirable and not at all surprising that it should be. Procedures for recruitment, vetting and monitoring members of the Security Service have been much extended and improved. I must not say that these precautions are guaranteed 100 per cent proof against penetration; I will say that I think that they come as near to that as is reasonable to expect if we are to retain the standards of a liberal, humane and democratic society.



36. And, as I have already said, I am satisfied that both procedures and attitudes have changed so markedly since 1964 as to make it in the highest degree unlikely that there could be a failure to inform Ministers of a development so important as the confession of someone who had acted as an agent for Russian Intelligence.

37. There is one other point which I should make before I leave this question of an inquiry. I am well aware that at least some of those who suggest an inquiry are motivated not by a desire to make sure that the lessons of the past are applied to the improvement of security for the future, but by a desire to expose the security authorities to sniping attack, undermine their morale, divert their attention from their main task, and thus reduce both the effectiveness of the security authorities and the protection of the country from the threats of espionage and subversion.

38. Because the Security Service has by its nature to operate in secret and cannot defend itself, it is vulnerable to that sort of ill-intentioned and ill-founded criticism, sometimes from people who should know better. It is of course the duty of Ministers to satisfy themselves that the Security Service operates both efficiently and scrupulously within the letter and spirit of its directive. My Right Hon. Friend, the Home Secretary and I accept that duty. We also have a duty to protect the Security Service's morale and effectiveness. For that reason I should not wish to subject it to an inquiry of the kind suggested, unless I was satisfied - as I am not - that such an inquiry was necessary and would serve some useful purpose of security.



39. The Service has been the subject of a certain amount of attack in recent years. The last case I remember was in the summer of 1977. That caused my predecessor to look into the allegations that were made, and to issue a statement on 23 August 1977 to say that he was satisfied that the allegations were unfounded and to express his confidence in the Service. I am glad to be able to express my confidence in it. I believe that it does a difficult job, and a job of great importance for the preservation of our democratic society from the risks of espionage and subversion, with a high degree of professional skill and competence, and a proper sense of professional dedication which avoids the obvious dangers of improper excess of zeal. So long as it continues to satisfy me that it is conducting itself in that manner, it can count on my support.

40. Mr. Speaker, there is one final point I should like to make before I sit down. It is this. Nothing can excuse Professor Blunt's disloyalty to his country in the now fairly distant past. It is true that he has for many years been protected from its consequences; but he has had to live with himself and his knowledge of it; now, now he has to live with the public disgrace. But he has made a full confession of what he did; he has continued to co-operate in the inquiries of the security authorities; unlike some of those who were associated with him in his disloyalty, he has not run away; and he has made it clear that he wishes to stay in this country and follow his calling, in which he is a man of unchallengeable distinction who has given much and has more to give. Without wishing to excuse what he did in the past, his present conduct seems to me to be courageous and dignified. I commend to the House the thought that, once the hysteria that we have seen these last few days has subsided, he should be left in peace to get on with his work.



Mr Whitmore



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

cc Press Office  
Cabinet Office  
Mr Whitmore  
I Gow

The Prime Minister,  
10, Downing Street,  
Westminster,  
London, S.W.1.

18th. Nov' 79.

Dear Margaret,

May I first thank you for the reply you gave to my written question last week in respect of Anthony Blunt and national security.

A good deal of comment has been made since then and obviously a number of issues are causing public concern.

I now feel it is important to seriously consider the need for a full debate in the House of Commons. In addition some form of enquiry appears to be needed for there are issues beyond the guilt of one man which are required to be examined.

I am writing to the Leader of the House expressing this view.

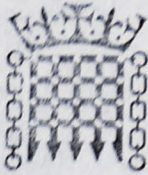
Again, many thanks.

Yours sincerely,

Ed Heath



From: R.C. Brown, M.P.



*cc Press Office*  
*Cabinet Office*  
*Mr Whitmore*  
*I Gow*

HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

18th November, 1979

Dear Mrs. Thatcher,

I hope you will agree that anyone seeking to further enrich Mr. Anthony Blunt, the self-confessed traitorous member of the British Establishment, would be seen as an outrage by the mass of the British people.

Whilst I appreciate that you have no power over the Establishment, least of all the Media, would you on behalf of the people make it clear to newspaper editors, particularly the Sunday nationals, that anyone of them who is prepared to bid for the serial rights of the story of this villain would be guilty of unseemly conduct of the worst possible type?

And furthermore, will you urgently seek to amend the law so that responsible investigative journalists have freedom to turn any stone in order that they may uncover the Blunts in our society?

Yours sincerely,

*R.C. Brown*  
*R.C. Brown*

The Rt.Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.,  
Prime Minister,  
10, Downing Street,  
London, SW1.



TOP SECRET

7

Seen by as PM  
PM  
1800

MR. WHITMORE

Sir John Colville telephoned me at 1440 today. He said that he wanted to give me some background to the story on page one of the Sunday Times.

He said that the Sunday Times had got hold of a garbled version of something which had actually happened in 1939 but had placed it in 1948 when he had been Private Secretary to Princess Elizabeth. He had therefore felt it necessary to set the record straight, and had accordingly spoken to the Sunday Times.

What had happened was as follows. In 1952 Lord Talbot (who at that time had some responsibility or other for security matters) had shown him a manuscript document which gave character descriptions of about twenty people including himself, Sir David Pitblado and various others. Talbot had asked him if he could help to identify the writer of these descriptions.

On seeing the document, he had decided that the description of himself was written by a man called Mr. John Cairncross.

This man had joined the FCO just before the war where they had been colleagues. He (Sir John) had then checked his diary and found that he had indeed had lunch with Cairncross in 1939, and it was following this lunch that the character description had been written.

Cairncross had left the FCO shortly afterwards and moved to the Treasury. He then at a later stage had moved to the Atomic Energy Authority, and he was there when he was discovered as the writer of the character descriptions in 1952. It was quickly established that he had been a Communist before the war, though he had become somewhat disenchanted with them after the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact. Following the revelation, he was forced to resign from the AEA.

/ Sir John explained

TOP SECRET



TOP SECRET

- 2 -

Sir John explained that the event which the Sunday Times reporter had got wrong was the lunch which he had had with Cairncroff. They had initially placed it in 1948, which if true, would have been immensely damaging in view of his (Sir John's) position. He had therefore decided to set the record straight, that he had not mentioned the man's name to anyone as yet - except to the Home Secretary, with whom he had spoken the previous day.

*Passage deleted and closed under FOI Exemption.  
Wayland, 11 March 2014*

I said that I would pass this information to the Prime Minister. Perhaps I could leave this for you to do before the meeting this evening.

Sir John finished by saying that if we wanted any further information he would be very ready to speak to us tomorrow.

T.P. Lankester

18 November 1979

TOP SECRET





Prime Minister

To see

*[Handwritten signature]*

16x1

Ref. A0688

MR. WHITMORE

Professor Anthony Blunt

I have spoken to the Legal Secretary to the Law Officers.

2. He thought that the Attorney General would be content to add to his proposed Answer a sentence to the effect:

See X/ ✓  
of the attached  
letter.

"If anyone is in possession of such information, I hope that he will make it available to the Director of Public Prosecutions so that it may be fully investigated".

3. I said that the Prime Minister thought that it would be advantageous for someone to write specifically to Mr. Andrew Boyle, inviting him to make the information which he had obtained in the course of his enquiries available, so that it could be the subject of proper investigation. It was clearly wrong on the one hand for the Attorney General to ask for such information; it would equally be undesirable for the security authorities to do so direct. It seemed to me that the appropriate person to make this request would be the Director of Public Prosecutions. Mr. Beckett undertook to put this to the Attorney General.

4. I said that there was reason to think that I might receive an approach from Professor Blunt's legal adviser for an interview, the purpose of which would be for him to satisfy himself, and his client, that a statement which he proposed to issue would not be prejudicial to national security. I said that I should be grateful for advice as to how I should respond to such a request, given that the fact of the request, and of the interview, might subsequently become public. Mr. Beckett said that he would consult the Attorney General, but that his view was that, if such a request were made and it was clear that the purpose was solely to satisfy Professor Blunt and his legal adviser that there was nothing in the statement prejudicial to national security, it would be a proper request to be made and it would be appropriate for me to accede to it. Mr. Beckett offered to be present, if such an interview took place.



5. Finally, Mr. Beckett said that it was not possible, as a matter of procedure, for the Attorney General to answer Mr. Cryer's Question about Dr. Mann until Monday, 19th November. It was for question whether the Attorney General should make a statement on the lines of the proposed Answer before the weekend. I said that the Prime Minister's Press Secretary had made it clear (unattributably) that we did not believe ~~\*\*\*\*\*~~ to be the Fifth Man, and this had now appeared in the newspapers. In the circumstances, we agreed that the Attorney General should issue no statement before the weekend, and that he should answer Mr. Cryer's Question on Monday, with the additional sentence on the lines proposed.

REA

(Robert Armstrong)

NB. Paras. 2 and 3 were overtaken by later events.

16th November, 1979

\*nm\* Name redacted and retained  
under Section 3(4)

S. Gray  
22/1/2016



PRIME MINISTER

Blunt

I said I would let you have the papers on the Blunt case so that you could read them again over the weekend.

I suggest that you concentrate on the following documents in the attached file:-

- (1) Sir John Hunt's minute of 8 May 1979, the attachments to which give a very full account of the story in its various aspects (Flag A).
- (2) Sir Robert Armstrong's minute of 14 November 1979 which covers not only the final draft of the answer which you gave to Mr. Leadbitter's question but also the latest version of the possible supplementary questions and answers (these overtake some of the earlier versions in the file which you need not waste time reading) (Flag B).
- (3) Your answer to Mr. Leadbitter in the form in which it was published in Hansard (Flag C)

AMC.

AMC

16 November 1979



CONFIDENTIAL

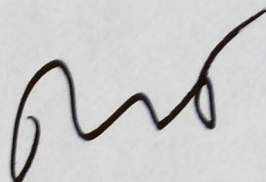
OS 7641 Ext. 3291

Communications on this subject should  
be addressed to  
THE LEGAL SECRETARY  
ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CHAMBERS

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CHAMBERS,  
LAW OFFICERS' DEPARTMENT,  
ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE,  
LONDON, W.C.2.

16 November 1979

Clive Whitmore Esq  
Prime Minister's Office  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON S W 1



*Dear Clive,*

Martin Vile raised with me this morning the matter of the Attorney General answering today Bob Cryer's Question about referring the conduct of Dr Mann to the DPP. That question is down today in the Notice of Questions for answer on Monday and Murdo MacLean, in the Chief Whip's Office, tells me that, after seeking advice from the House Authorities, it is not possible as a matter of procedure for the Attorney to answer that question today.

There is nothing, however, to prevent the Attorney General issuing a statement and in view of the speculation about Dr Mann, if it is thought that this matter should be got out of the way before the weekend the Attorney could today issue a statement on the lines of the attached draft. Alternatively, the matter could be left until Monday when the Attorney would answer Mr Cryer's question as follows:-

X: |

"No. I have no information relating to the conduct of Dr Wilfred Mann which would justify my making any such reference to the Director of Public Prosecutions."

I am copying this letter to Martin Vile.

Not.

After discussion with  
Sir Robert Gammage it was  
decided not to issue a  
statement today. Our position  
on the Fifth Mann and Dr  
Mann has been made  
clear in press briefing.

JAW

16xi

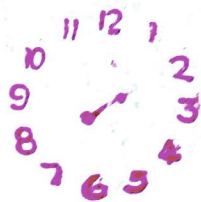
*Yours sincerely  
Bill Beckett*

W C BECKETT

CONFIDENTIAL



16 NOV 1979





CONFIDENTIAL

**DRAFT**

STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL TODAY

In view of widespread speculation the Attorney General considers it right that it should be known that no information has been brought to his attention which would justify any reference to the Director of Public Prosecutions concerning the conduct of Dr Wilfred Mann.

CONFIDENTIAL



INTERVIEW WITH MR. RUBINSTEIN, SOLICITOR TO MR. ANTONY BLUNT,  
ON WORLD AT ONE, FRIDAY, 16 NOVEMBER, 1979

FWJ

Mr. Rubinstein was asked who actually passed on the crucial message which warned Mr. Blunt he was finally to be exposed officially as a Soviet spy.

MR. RUBINSTEIN:

Sir Robert Armstrong of the Cabinet Office.

INTERVIEWER:

And he told you when?

MR. RUBINSTEIN:

On Wednesday morning.

INTERVIEWER:

About what time was that?

MR. RUBINSTEIN:

10.30?

INTERVIEWER:

Exactly what did he tell you?

MR. RUBINSTEIN:

He told me that Mrs. Thatcher would give a written answer to a question by an MP, Mr. Leadbitter, the following day.

INTERVIEWER:

Did he tell you, in fact, what would be in that statement?



MR. RUBINSTEIN:

No. Perhaps he didn't know. But he didn't tell me what would be in it. He said that Mrs. Thatcher would give a statement based on the information she was given by her advisers. That was my impression.

INTERVIEWER:

You understood from the message from the Cabinet Office that it would, in fact, say that Mr. Blunt was a self-confessed spy?

MR. RUBINSTEIN:

I expected that that would be one of things it would say.

INTERVIEWER:

Didn't the Cabinet official mentioned say exactly why they were telling you early?

MR. RUBINSTEIN:

I think it was as a matter of courtesy to my client.

INTERVIEWER:

Did you then immediately tell your client?

MR. RUBINSTEIN:

No. I had an opportunity during the day to tell him and I took that opportunity.

INTERVIEWER:

What did he say?



MR. RUBINSTEIN:

He appreciated the courtesy but, otherwise, I can't tell you what he said.

INTERVIEWER:

Did he then give you any indication as to what he might do as a result of this?

MR. RUBINSTEIN:

No, he didn't.

INTERVIEWER:

Have you had any contact with him since?

MR. RUBINSTEIN:

I can't say.

INTERVIEWER:

You say you can't say. I understand that, but could you, in fact, give some indication as to where Mr. Blunt might be now?

MR. RUBINSTEIN:

No. I don't know where he is, now.

INTERVIEWER:

During your association with Mr. Blunt, did you, in fact, have any reason yourself to believe that he'd been a spy at one stage?

MR. RUBINSTEIN:

I don't think that's a question I can answer.



INTERVIEWER:

Can I ask you, as a solicitor, if you were put in that position, or a similar position, where you knew your client was a spy, or had engaged in some illegal activity, would you then feel constrained to do something about it?

MR. RUBINSTEIN:

That is a very important question and, of course, to answer a question of that kind, one has to consider the feelings of one's partners. But we are dealing here with somebody who, to my knowledge, was a pardoned spy and a spy who has been pardoned on whatever grounds, in whatever circumstances, is not simply a self-confessed spy.

INTERVIEWER:

Can I ask you how long your association with Mr. Blunt - your professional association - goes back? How many years?

MR. RUBINSTEIN:

I can't tell you that.

INTERVIEWER:

Have the security authorities in Britain ever approached you about your client?

MR. RUBINSTEIN:

No.

INTERVIEWER:

One crucial question remains to be answered and that is if there's any thought in Professor Blunt's mind of heading for the Soviet Union. Do you think there is?



MR. RUBINSTEIN:

No. I don't.

INTERVIEWER:

Do you have any reasons for this?

MR. RUBINSTEIN:

Just my instinct about the man.

INTERVIEWER:

When do you expect him to appear back in Britain?

MR. RUBINSTEIN:

I've no idea whether he's in or not in Britain from that point of view so why should I know when he'll appear back in Britain?

INTERVIEWER:

Can I ask you if ... When Mr. Blunt reappears, whether you'll expect him to make a statement?

MR. RUBINSTEIN:

That is entirely a matter for him. I think it's quite possible that he will.



Prime Minister.

To ask.

Full  
1672

QUESTIONS TABLED FOR NEXT WEEK REGARDING "THE FOURTH MAN"

Monday 19 November

Mr. Bob Cryer (Keighley): To ask Mr. Attorney General, if he will refer to the Director of Public Prosecutions with a view to prosecution for breaches of the Official Secrets Act the conduct of Dr. Wilfrd Mann in connection with the defection of Burgess and Maclean. (PW)

Mr. Dennis Skinner (Bolsover): To ask Mr. Attorney General, if he will refer to the Director of Public Prosecutions with a view to prosecution for breaches of the Official Secrets Act the conduct of Sir Anthony Blunt in connection with the defection of Burgess and Maclean. (PW)

Mr. Christopher Price (Lewisham West): To ask Mr. Attorney General, if he will refer to the Director of Public Prosecutions the case of Sir Anthony Blunt, with a view to prosecution under the Official Secrets Acts in respect of the Burgess and Maclean case. (PW)

Tuesday 20 November

Mr. Bob Cryer (Keighley): To ask the Prime Minister, if any persons other than Sir Anthony Blunt have been granted immunities, waivers or concessions of any kind in connection with the defection of Burgess and Maclean.

Mr. Dennis Skinner (Bolsover): To ask the Prime Minister, following her statement regarding Sir Anthony Blunt, whether any other persons connected with the Burgess/Maclean case, have been given concessions or immunities from prosecutions under the Official Secrets Act; and if she will list the names.

Mr. D. Clark (South Shields): To ask the Prime Minister, whether a formal warning was given to Anthony Blunt's Solicitor prior to her Parliamentary answer of 15 November, and if so why.

Mr. Tony Marlow (Northampton North): To ask the Prime Minister, if she will specify under what legal provisions Anthony Blunt was given an immunity from prosecution; and whether there is any power to revoke this decision at a later stage.



10.11.  
Mr. Michael Meacher (Oldham West): To ask the Prime Minister, in the light of the fact that the Prime Minister in 1964 was not informed of the spying activities of Sir Anthony Blunt by the then Head of MI5, whether she will institute procedures to ensure that a similar failure to inform her does not occur in future.

Mr. Michael Meacher (Oldham West): To ask the Prime Minister, if she will set up a public inquiry into the full security implications of the Blunt affair.

Mr. Michael Meacher (Oldham West): To ask the Prime Minister, if she will make a further statement regarding the other public services in which it is suspected that there may have been penetration by foreign security services in relation to the Blunt affair.

All above Questions are Priority Written.



PRIME MINISTER

*MS*

c.c. Mr. Whitmore

PA NS 2

I thought I should record what took place in the House this morning.

Mr. Hamilton rose to say that he would be seeking an S09 debate on Monday, since it was clear that the Government had no intention of offering their own time for a debate on Blunt. He said that the story had been kept under wraps by a conspiracy among the establishment.

Mr. Skinner said that in the light of the revelations of yesterday and the absence of a statement from the Despatch Box, and the fact that Lord Home and Lord Butler had said that they did not know about Blunt, he wished to support the application. He said that thousands, if not millions of people were asking the question of who was running the country, and whether there was a network outside the democratically elected Government.

Mr. Cryer said that the country was concerned about startling revelations which amounted to a scandal of national proportions. He invited the Leader of the House to say whether there would be an early debate. He asked whether there were other moles, and whether there might even be 20 of them. He said that there had been an establishment cover-up, and asked whether there was an inner Government or a democratically elected Government.

Mr. Price asked the Speaker to confirm that there were precedents in the Burgess and Maclean case for a full debate on the floor of the House, and that there was no absolute ban on discussing grave and important matters of this kind in the House.

Mr. McNally said that a lot of people in the country could not understand why the House of Commons was not able to discuss the case.

/ The



The Speaker said that he would undertake to give an application for an SO9 Debate "very serious consideration", and that he would deal with it on Monday.

MS

16 November, 1979.





CONFIDENTIAL

Prime Minister

To see.

16/11

16/11

RA

Ref. A0687

MR. WHITMORE

I went to see Mr. Callaghan at 3.00 pm this afternoon, at his request, about the Blunt affair.

2. Apart from wishing to refresh his memory of a certain paper which he had seen in Government, and also to refresh his memory of the events leading up to the statement which he issued on 23rd August 1977 about the Security Services, he wanted to discuss what he should say, in the event of there being a debate. He thought that he would be expected to intervene. He would have to say in that debate - if he had not already had to say earlier - that he knew about Blunt when he was Home Secretary and when he was Prime Minister. He would have to consider very carefully how he would explain why he had acquiesced in the continuing secrecy on Blunt's involvement. He was wondering whether, among other reasons, he might indicate that one consideration in his mind had been a desire not to expose The Queen to unnecessary embarrassment, when there was nothing to gain in security terms by doing so.

3. He would be thinking about this over the weekend, and may wish to have another word with me then.

4. In the meantime, you are going to provide him, subject to suitable safeguards, with copies of certain papers of which he wished to refresh his memory.

RA

(Robert Armstrong)

16th November, 1979



C.W.  
H.W.

NOTE OF LOBBY BRIEFING GIVEN BY BERNARD INGHAM AT 1100, 16 NOVEMBER

ANTHONY BLUNT

In reply to the question of why the Cabinet Office was involved, Mr. Ingham said that the Secretary to the Cabinet had telephoned Mr. Blunt's solicitors on Wednesday on the Prime Minister's instructions. It was a common courtesy that when a statement about an individual was to be made the person concerned was notified in advance. We could not confirm at what time the call had been made but found it astonishing that correspondents should think it might have been before 6.30 a.m. The solicitors would not have been given the full statement but would have been told that it was to be an answer of substance.

Assuming that only No. 10, the Home Office and the Table Office knew of the question in advance of its appearance in the Order Paper, there was speculation that Mr. Blunt might still have useful contacts who had "tipped him off to disappear" before the facts were made public. Mr. Ingham said he found this notion fanciful. Correspondents seemed to be suffering from "a touch of the Smiley's". Mr. Blunt had nothing to "flee" from, apart from shame. He had confessed many years ago. He had left the service in 1945 and since then had had no access to sensitive material. We did not know that he had "disappeared". We had no knowledge of or interest in his whereabouts. He was now of no interest to the Government. His present whereabouts were a matter for his solicitors.

Correspondents asked when the Prime Minister, as head of the security service, had been aware of the full facts - since it was reported that Lord Home had not been aware of them when he was Prime Minister. Mr. Ingham said the Prime Minister knew the full story this year - we would not confirm when but said it was before last week. He could not answer for previous administrations. However, from his experience in Government, he thought it unlikely that such "mistakes/omissions" in informing Prime Ministers would happen in the future.

It was not the Government's intention to make any further statements on this matter but, of course, they would reply to specific questions in the House. In reply to the question on whether any de-briefing of Mr. Blunt was now over, we said that correspondents were free to draw that conclusion.

We could not deal with any questions on possible embarrassment to the Royal Family over this revelation.

Correspondents asked whether there would be any statement on Dr. Wilfred Mann as the "fifth man". Mr. Ingham said that the Government had no evidence to support any allegation that Dr. Wilfred Mann behaved as "Basil" was said to have done, and we had no reason to doubt the truth of Dr. Mann's reported statement to the press that the allegation was without foundation.





CABINET OFFICE

With the compliments of  
Sir Robert Armstrong KCB, CVO  
*Secretary of the Cabinet*

C. A. Whitmore, Esq

70 Whitehall, London SW1A 2AS  
Telephone: 01-233 8319



Ref: A0682

NOTE FOR RECORD

Sir Anthony Blunt

I spoke both to Lord Home and to Lord Butler on the telephone on the evening of 15th November.

2. Lord Home said that he was being asked by the Press whether he had been told about Blunt's confession in 1964. He had no recollection of being told, and proposed to say that he had not been. I confirmed that there was no record of his being told either of the offer of immunity from prosecution or of Blunt's confession. The offer of immunity was authorised by the then Attorney General, Sir John Hobson, who would have been entitled to take the view that this was a decision made in his capacity as a Law Officer, which did not engage collective responsibility.

3. When I spoke to Lord Butler, he had already rung up earlier because he had been pursued by the Press. In his earlier conversation he had said that, though he was Foreign Secretary at the time, he was not told about the offer of immunity or about Blunt's confession. He was told by the Private Secretary at 10 Downing Street that the matter had been handled by the Prime Minister, the Home Secretary and the Attorney General only. Lord Butler complained that he ought to have been told: he was the Foreign Secretary, he ought to have been Prime Minister, he was much involved in Trinity College, and Sir Anthony Blunt was Director of the Courtauld Institute which had been set up by his father-in-law. Following that conversation Lord Butler apparently spoke to reporters, to the effect that he understood that the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary at the time had been told and that he had not, though he thought he ought to have been. When I spoke to Lord Butler I told him Lord Home, the Prime Minister at the time, had not been told and would be telling the Press so. This made Lord Butler feel a good deal better. He told me that he was about to leave for the United States to deliver a lecture at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. The text of his lecture included a number of complimentary references to Sir Anthony Blunt, which he was in the process of now deleting.

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

(Robert Armstrong)

16th November 1979



19. 13.

1

PA  
MJS

PRIME MINISTER

Lord Home telephoned this evening to ask us to confirm that he was not told when he was Prime Minister about Sir Anthony Blunt. Robert Armstrong spoke to him and confirmed that this was indeed the case, and that no Minister other than the then Attorney General, Sir John Hobson, was consulted. Lord Home was content with this explanation.

He had already been asked for comments by the press, and will now say that he did not know.

MJS

15 November 1979

(Removed from box by CAW.)



10. 11. 1979

1.

PRIME MINISTER

Lord Butler telephoned this evening, about the Blunt affair. He was surprised that he had not learned of the case whilst he was a Minister. He emphasised his additional connections, both through Trinity College and through the Courtauld Institute, which initially took over his London town house.

I think that he was eventually reassured that the matter was raised between Prime Ministers, Home Secretaries and Attorney Generals, and had not come to light during his time at the Home Office. I have arranged for Sir Robert Armstrong to speak to him to explain that in 1964 it was handled only by the Attorney. (Lord Butler clearly felt that Sir Alec Douglas-Home should have brought him into the picture.)

Lord Butler specifically said that he did not want to trouble you with this, and I doubt whether you can add anything: I judge that he is put out not to have been brought into the picture in the past, and has no complaint against the present Government's exclusion of him from prior briefing on your statement. He will however be at his flat in London tomorrow afternoon if you want to have a word with him.

Lord Home also telephoned later, seeking confirmation that he had not been informed of the matter when Prime Minister. Sir Robert Armstrong spoke to him, and, I believe, left him satisfied that he could handle press enquiries on the basis that the Attorney General had dealt with the matter, which had not become one for collective decision.

15 November 1979

MAJ

He said he  
didn't know on the  
radio!

MS



# WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

680

Thursday 15 November 1979

## SECURITY

**Mr. Leadbitter** asked the Prime Minister if she will make a statement on recent evidence concerning the actions of an individual, whose name has been supplied to her, in relation to the security of the United Kingdom.

**Mr. Skinner** asked the Prime Minister if she will make a statement on recent evidence concerning the actions of an individual, whose name has been supplied to her, in relation to the security of the United Kingdom.

**The Prime Minister :** The name which the hon. Gentleman has given me is that of Sir Anthony Blunt.

In April 1964 Sir Anthony Blunt admitted to the security authorities that he had been recruited by and had acted as a talent-spotter for Russian intelligence before the war, when he was a don at Cambridge, and had passed information regularly to the Russians while he was a member of the Security Service between 1940 and 1945. He made this admission after being given an undertaking that he would not be prosecuted if he confessed.

Inquiries were of course made before Blunt joined the Security Service in 1940, and he was judged a fit person. He was known to have held Marxist views at Cambridge, but the security authorities had no reason either in 1940 or at any time during his service to doubt his loyalty to his country.

On leaving the Security Service in 1945 Blunt reverted to his profession as an art historian. He held a number of academic appointments. He was also appointed as Surveyor of The King's Pictures in 1945, and as Surveyor of The Queen's Pictures in 1952. He was given a KCVO in 1956. On his retirement as Surveyor, he was appointed as an Adviser for The Queen's Pictures and Drawings in 1972, and he retired from his appointment in 1978.

He first came under suspicion in the course of the inquiries which followed the defection of Burgess and Maclean in 1951, when the Security Service was told that Burgess had said in 1937 that he was

working for a secret branch of the Comintern and that Blunt was one of his sources. There was no supporting evidence for this. When confronted with it, Blunt denied it. Nevertheless the Security Service remained suspicious of him, and began an intensive and prolonged investigation of his activities. During the course of this investigation he was interviewed on 11 occasions. He persisted in his denial, and no evidence against him was obtained.

The inquiries which preceded the exposure and defection of Philby in January 1963 produced nothing which implicated Blunt. Early in 1964, new information was received which directly implicated Blunt. It did not, however, provide a basis on which charges could be brought. The then Attorney-General decided in April 1964, after consultation with the Director of Public Prosecutions, that the public interest lay in trying to secure a confession from Blunt not only to arrive at a definite conclusion on his own involvement but also to obtain information from him about any others who might still be a danger. It was considered important to gain his co-operation in the continuing investigations by the security authorities, following the defections of Burgess, Maclean and Philby, into Soviet penetration of the security and intelligence services and other public services during and after the war. Accordingly the Attorney-General authorised the offer of immunity from prosecution to Blunt if he confessed. Blunt then admitted to the security authorities that, like his friends Burgess, Maclean and Philby, he had become an agent of Russian intelligence and talent-spotted for them at Cambridge during the 1930s; that he had regularly passed information to the Russians while he was a member of the Security Service; and that, although after 1945 he was no longer in a position to supply the Russians with classified information, in 1951 he used his old contact with the Russian Intelligence Service to assist in the arrangements for the defection of Burgess and Maclean. Both at the time of his confession and subsequently Blunt provided useful information about Russian intelligence activities and about his



association with Burgess, Maclean and Philby.

The Queen's Private Secretary was informed in April 1964 both of Blunt's confession and of the immunity from prosecution on the basis of which it had been made. Blunt was not required to resign his appointment in the Royal Household, which was unpaid. It carried with it no access to classified information and no risk to security, and the security authorities thought it desirable not to put at risk his co-operation in their continuing investigations.

The decision to offer immunity from prosecution was taken because intensive investigation from 1951 to 1964 had produced no evidence to support charges. Successive Attorneys-General in 1972, in June 1974 and in June 1979 have agreed that, having regard to the immunity granted in order to obtain the confession which has always been and still is the only firm evidence against Blunt, there are no grounds on which criminal proceedings could be instituted.

[Continued in Col. 683]



[Sir G. Howe.]

question that we should be constantly addressing to hon. Members on the Labour Benches is whether they are criticising us today for taking action to reduce public borrowing or public spending, or, on the other hand, for not spending enough. The dichotomy in policy on the part of the Labour Party has to be resolved. I hope very much that Labour Members opposite will support us, as we need their support, in continuing to reduce public expenditure so as to restore the health of the economy.

**Mr. Meacher:** Given that the main cause of an extension of the money supply is now the soaring amount of bank lending to the private sector, will the Chancellor accept that the supplementary special deposit scheme is now totally inadequate to remedy this? If that is so, why has he maintained it? Or, if he still thinks it is relevant, why has he not blocked such patent evasion measures as the issue of acceptances?

**Sir G. Howe:** For the reason I have explained to my hon. Friend, that action to block one variation of that kind is all too likely to lead to the development of some variation beyond it, making it more difficult to measure and identify what is taking place. As I said in my statement, I recognise that the supplementary special deposit scheme has many shortcomings about it, but it would be foolish to sweep it away without having further thought about what supplementary system ought to take its place. That is why studies are continuing on a monetary-based control.

The hon. Gentleman would be unwise to conclude that our problems spring mainly or wholly from expanding bank lending to the private sector. He should bear in mind the extent to which public borrowing has, as I said in my statement, been substantially and unpredictably increased to the tune of no less than £1,000 million, as a direct result of irresponsibility by no more than 80 people.

#### SIR ANTHONY BLUNT

**Mr. Skinner:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I want to raise a matter on the revelations affecting Sir Anthony Blunt, and a statement that has been provided in the form of a written answer today by the right hon. Lady the Prime Minister.

13 P 36

Sir Anthony Blunt is known to have confessed to having been involved in the Burgess-Maclean-Philby and others affair. I want to ask you, Mr. Speaker, whether you consider that this matter of security is so important that it should be the subject of a statement from the Dispatch Box so that it can be properly examined and probed by Members of the House of Commons? Is it not worth noting that it contrasts sharply with the relentless pursuit of the journalists involved in the ABC case, and Mr. Philip Agee?

Does it not warrant a statement now from the Box and also a full debate on the matter in the course of next week?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I know that the hon. Gentleman is interested in the same question. I allowed him to make his full point of order in the knowledge that I am not responsible for national security. That responsibility does not lie with the occupant of this Chair. Therefore, there can be no point of order about that.

**Mr. Skinner:** On a different aspect of the point of order—[*Interruption*].

**Mr. Speaker:** There can be no point of order about national security, because I am not responsible for it.

**Mr. Christopher Price:** I want to raise a point of order about the issuing of written answers in this House. It is a convention in the House that, when a question is down for written answer, the normal time for the issuing of that answer is 3.30 pm. One of the reasons for that is that hon. Members should be able to raise during business questions matters which are the subject of written answers. On this occasion, Mr. Speaker, the answer to a written question formed the subject of a very important issue which has been reported in all the newspapers today, and on which I wished to address a question to the Leader of the House asking for an urgent debate next week on this issue. This answer was delayed until the end of business questions, which deprived hon. Members of their proper and rightful privilege of questioning the Leader of the House on this issue, when the whole country is wanting to know when we are to debate the double standards about the Official Secrets Act which this Government are attempting to introduce in another place, thereby making matters very much worse.



**Mr. Foot :** Further to the point of order raised by my hon. Friend, I believe that the House will agree that a matter of significance to the House as a whole arises here. Could not the Leader of the House assist us by saying that a statement will be made tomorrow so that questions can be put? I would have thought that this was a subject on which it might be at any rate debateable whether it should have been the subject of a statement rather than a written answer. Therefore, will the Leader of the House assist us by saying that a statement will be made tomorrow?

**The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Leader of the House of Commons (Mr. St. John-Stevas):** As to the point raised by the hon. Member for Lewisham, West (Mr. Price), written answers come at various times of the day. There is no absolutely fixed time. Sometimes they come much later. There was no particular significance in the time chosen for this.

As to the need for a statement, in these matters of security it is advisable, as you have shown, Mr. Speaker, to tread prudently. I should have thought that the written answer by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister was of such length and detail that we would be wise to consider that before pursuing any other matter.

**Mr. Foot :** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The right hon. Gentleman made an important statement. I hope that what

he says means that he is not excluding the possibility that the Prime Minister will make a statement on the question so that she may have questions put to her on the subject. After all, this has been a matter on which statements were made in the House. I hope that the answer means that he is not excluding the possibility of a further oral statement on the subject.

**Mr. Cryer** *rose*—

**Mr. Skinner** *rose*—

**Mr. Speaker :** Order. We have dealt with that point.

## BILL PRESENTED

### TRANSPORT

Mr. Norman Fowler presented a Bill to amend the law relating to public service vehicles; to make provision for and in connection with the transfer of the undertaking of the National Freight Corporation to a company; to provide for the making of payments by the Minister of Transport in aid of certain railway and other pension schemes; to make amendments about articulated vehicles; to abolish the Freight Integration Council; to repeal certain provisions about special authorisations for the use of large goods vehicles and about charges on independent tramways, trolley vehicles and the like, and for connected purposes: And the same was read the First time; and ordered to be read a Second time tomorrow and to be printed. [Bill 79.]



Tuesday 13 November 1979

[Continuation from Col. 588]

**SOCIAL SERVICES****Spasticity**

**Mr. Carter-Jones** asked the Secretary of State for Social Services if he will establish a national plan for the prevention of spasticity and related handicaps; and if he will make a statement.

**Dr. Vaughan:** The Department encourages health authorities to maintain the highest possible standards of care for mothers and babies before, during and after delivery. Parents also have a responsibility in this matter and we aim to encourage expectant mothers to do all they can themselves by way of regular attendance at ante-natal clinics and in following advice offered on such matters as genetic counselling, diet, smoking and vaccination against rubella.

I am advised that spasticity is caused by a multiplicity of factors, and, whilst the aetiology of some forms of spasticity and handicap are known, in many cases it is as yet impossible to determine their cause. The results of the considerable body of research currently in both Medical Research Council and departmental programmes should help towards the prevention of spastic disorders.

**Maternity Services**

**Mr. Carter-Jones** asked the Secretary of State for Social Services (1) if he will abandon the proposed cuts in maternity services; and if he will improve the services for pregnant women and unborn babies;

(2) if he is considering the closure of inefficient maternity units with a higher than average perinatal infant mortality and neo-natal death rate; and if he will make a statement.

**Sir George Young:** The Department is committed to maintaining and improving the quality of care for mothers and babies throughout pregnancy and child-birth. Responsibility for providing maternity services rests with health authorities and I expect them to keep the standard of their services under careful review. The closure of any maternity unit must always be considered in the

light of local circumstances. Where a particular unit has been found to be inefficient I would expect the health authority concerned to take appropriate action.

**Mr. Carter-Jones** asked the Secretary of State for Social Services if he will create first-class maternity special and intensive care facilities for the newborn in every health district; and if he will make a statement.

**Sir George Young:** The provision of services for mothers and babies before, during and after delivery is a matter for individual health authorities, which must determine levels of provision according to local needs and resources. Normally, a consultant maternity unit and special care baby unit would be provided in every district general hospital—or equivalent. Intensive care facilities for the newly born are required by a small proportion of babies whose highly specialised needs can best be met in a number of regional units where the substantial numbers of medical, nursing and supporting staff and specialised equipment required can most effectively be concentrated.

**Handicaps (Research)**

**Mr. Carter-Jones** asked the Secretary of State for Social Services if he will finance further additional research into the cause of handicaps; and if he will undertake studies to show which preventive measure will pay off best; and if he will make a statement.

**Dr. Vaughan:** The Medical Research Council, which is the main Government-funded body undertaking research relevant to these questions from funds provided by the Department of Education and Science and the Health Departments, has already been asked to consider whether it is feasible to commission more research in the perinatal and neonatal fields which are regarded by the Health Departments as priority areas. Much more fundamental research into the underlying causes of many of the conditions of handicap is needed before studies to evaluate the most effective preventive measures could be undertaken.



# LOBBY BRIEFING

time:

date:

NOTE OF THE LEADER OF THE HOUSE'S LOBBY AT 5.00 pm ON 15 NOVEMBER

## ANTHONY BLUNT

The Leader of the House said that the chances of the Government making any further statement on this case or security matters generally were extraordinarily slender. A statement or a debate on security matters was not the way to deal with this highly sensitive subject. The Leader felt that the Prime Minister had struck a good balance by providing a full and detailed answer to Ted Leadbitter's Question. Nearly all the events leading up to today's Answer had taken place before this Government had come to power. The Leader did not think a further statement was necessary nor did he feel that there was much support for the Point of Order raised by Michael Foot or Christopher Price in the House this afternoon. But naturally, as was the custom in the House, if other views were put forward strongly they would be taken into account.

Asked about the withdrawal of Anthony Blunt's KCVO, the Leader pointed out that this was a personal appointment made by The Queen but correspondents could assume that there would have been no disagreement between The Queen and the Prime Minister about the action taken today to annul the appointment.

Asked why the appointment had only been withdrawn today rather than at an earlier time, say in 1964, the Leader said that he could not add to the full reply given by the Prime Minister on the case as a whole. Answering questions that there was one law for the rich and another for the poor, the Leader said he believed that, for example, a Junior Officer who had acted similarly would have been treated in the same way as Anthony Blunt.

To questions that there might be a fifth, sixth or seventh man, the Leader said that the Government hoped that today's statement represented the end of the matter.

Asked whether the new Freedom of Information Bill before the House would inhibit the type of inquiry made by Andrew Boyle, the Leader said that he hoped it would not be so.



Ref: A0659



CONFIDENTIAL

Prime Minister.

fall

14/11

MR. WHITMORE

am

Sir Anthony Blunt

I saw Sir Anthony Blunt's legal adviser, Mr. Michael Rubinstein, and Lord Rothschild this morning and spoke to them as agreed.

2. Mr. Rubinstein was not greatly surprised, and said "speaking as a citizen" that he thought it was right to make the statement, as things had now turned out. He accepted that the annulment of the knighthood was inevitable. He did not seem to expect any dramatic reaction from Sir Anthony Blunt: indeed, he surmised that it might be something of a relief to Sir Anthony that it was now all coming out into the open.

3. Lord Rothschild showed rather more anxiety. He was surprised to hear that the Prime Minister was disclosing the offer of immunity from prosecution. I explained why it was thought necessary to tell the complete story, if anything was to be said at all - as in present circumstances it was inevitable.

4. Lord Rothschild said that he himself had had no contact with Sir Anthony Blunt "since this thing broke"; though Blunt had from time to time rung up Lady Rothschild for "solace", she had been very careful in what she said to him. Neither Lord Rothschild nor Lady Rothschild had had any approach from journalists in recent days. If they were approached following the Prime Minister's statement, they would both say that they knew nothing about Blunt's spying activities until they saw the Prime Minister's statement; they would say that both had known Blunt before and during the war; Lord Rothschild had known that Blunt had held Marxist views while at Cambridge, but neither of them had any reason to doubt his loyalty to his country.

RA

Robert Armstrong

14th November 1979



Ref. A0665

PRIME MINISTER

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Sir Anthony Blunt: Cabinet

I had a quick word with the Attorney General after this afternoon's meeting. We neither of us think that you need say anything at Cabinet on this subject. These matters are traditionally handled by the Prime Minister and Ministers directly concerned, without involving a wider range of colleagues.

2. If you feel that you have to do so you could do so briefly, under the heading of Parliamentary Affairs. You might speak as follows:

Colleagues will have seen that a book has recently been published, alleging that, in addition to Burgess, Maclean and Philby, there were a Fourth Man and a Fifth Man. The book does not plainly identify those concerned, but drops hints and clues which enable the identities to be deduced. Newspapers have made those identifications explicit. We are reasonably satisfied that the allegations about a Fifth Man are a false trail. The same cannot unfortunately be said about the Fourth Man. You have come to the conclusion that the public interest requires a reasonably full statement of the facts. These are that in April 1964 Sir Anthony Blunt, then Surveyor of The Queen's Pictures, on the basis of an offer of immunity from prosecution if he confessed, admitted that he had been recruited by and acted as a talent-spotter for Russian Intelligence when he was a don at Cambridge before the war, had regularly passed information to the Russians when he was a member of the Security Service from 1940 to 1945, and in 1951 had used his old contacts with Russian Intelligence to assist in the arrangements for the defection of Burgess and Maclean. You could add that the present Attorney General had confirmed the judgment of his predecessors, that there is no evidence, apart from Blunt's confession, on which charges could be based.





This is a sorry story. There will be much public comment on the role of Ministers and the security authorities and on Blunt's relationship with the Palace, from which he retired only last year. Your Answer this afternoon will be a full one, to which you hope it will not be necessary to add.

MR.  
AP

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

14th November, 1979



Ref: A0658



SECRET

MR. WHITMORE

29PS  
6

Prime Minister.  
 This is the latest version of the  
 reply to the leadbitter.  
 My pencilled amendments are  
 designed to meet the points which  
 you raised earlier this morning.  
 Are you content?  
 Yes, my  
 JMS 14/11

Sir Anthony Blunt

There are one or two further changes to make in the draft Answer.

For the sake of convenience I have had the Answer retyped in what I hope is now the final version. It includes a sentence leading in from Mr. Leadbitter's Question.

2. I also attach supplementary questions and answers, suitably brought up to date where necessary. They are of course prepared against the possibility of use in the House of Commons. For the purposes of dealing with the Press, though I realise that Mr. Ingham is bound to face some questions from the Lobby, I have to say that I think it would be wise for him to stand as far as possible on the Prime Minister's statement and to refuse to be drawn by probing questions. This is a minefield, and if you are not thoroughly familiar with it, it is both easy and dangerous inadvertently to put a foot wrong.

(Robert Armstrong)

14th November 1979



~~To establish whether <sup>any</sup> others were involved and the extent of  
their role to security.~~  
to obtain information from him about <sup>any</sup> others who might  
still be a danger. It was considered important to gain

6. The inquiries which preceded the exposure and defection of Philby in January 1963 produced nothing which implicated Blunt. Early in 1964, new information was received which directly implicated Blunt. It did not, however, provide a basis on which charges could be brought. The then Attorney General decided in April 1964, after consultation with the Director of Public Prosecutions, that the public interest lay in trying to secure a confession from Blunt, ~~in order~~ not only to arrive at a definite conclusion on his <sup>own</sup> involvement but also to obtain his co-operation in the continuing investigations by the security authorities, following the defections of Burgess, Maclean and Philby, into Soviet penetration of the security and intelligence services and other public services during and after the war. Accordingly the Attorney General authorised the offer of immunity from prosecution to Blunt if he confessed. Blunt then admitted to the security authorities that, like his friends Burgess, Maclean and Philby, he had become an agent of Russian intelligence and had talent-spotted for them at Cambridge during the 1930s; that he had regularly passed information to the Russians while he was a member of the Security Service; and that, although after 1945 he was no longer in a position to supply the Russians with classified information, in 1951 he used his old contact with the Russian Intelligence Service to assist in the arrangements for the defection of Burgess and Maclean. Both at the time of his confession and subsequently Blunt provided useful information about Russian intelligence activities and about his association with Burgess, Maclean and Philby.

~~To establish whether  
any others were  
involved and  
whether they were  
at risk. It was  
considered important~~

7. The Queen's Private Secretary was informed in April 1964 both of Blunt's confession and of the immunity from prosecution on the basis of which it had been made. Blunt was not required to resign his appointment in the Royal Household, which was unpaid. It carried with it no access to classified information and no risk to security, and the security authorities thought it desirable not to put at risk his co-operation in their continuing investigations.

8. The decision to offer immunity from prosecution was taken because intensive investigation from 1951 to 1964 had produced no evidence to support charges. Successive Attorneys General in 1972, in June 1974 and in June 1979 have agreed that, having regard to the immunity granted in order to obtain the confession which has always been and still is the only firm evidence against Blunt, there are no grounds on which criminal proceedings could be instituted.



Note of Possible Supplementaries and Suggested Answers

Q. 1 Was Blunt protected by former colleagues in the Security Service?

A. Colleagues of Blunt who were interrogated in the course of investigations to which I have referred co-operated fully.

Q. 2 Is it not the fact that Goronwy Rees informed the authorities in 1951 that Burgess had told him that Blunt was a Russian agent? Why was no action taken at the time?

A. Mr. Rees was the source of the allegation made to the Security Service in 1951 that Burgess had said ~~in 1951~~ that Blunt was one of the sources used by Burgess for his work for the Comintern. That allegation was thoroughly examined in the course of the prolonged investigation of Blunt from 1951 onwards, but, as I have said, no supporting evidence was obtained until Blunt confessed in 1964.

Q. 3 Was the Palace informed about Blunt's record?

A. The Queen's Private Secretary was informed in 1964, \* ~ ~ ~ ~ \*

Q. 4 Why was Blunt allowed to continue to hold a post in the Royal Household after his past relationship with the Russian Intelligence Service was known.

A. Blunt's position in the Royal Household, which was unpaid, involved no access to classified information and no risk to security. Following a promise of immunity from prosecution he had confessed and co-operated with his interrogator. The security authorities felt that it was desirable to avoid taking any action which might have put at risk his willingness to continue to provide useful information.

Q. 5 Did Blunt confess to recruiting other spies for the Russians or did he name any others whom he knew to be Russian agents?

A. As I have said in my statement, in addition to making his confession, Blunt has co-operated with subsequent interrogations and has provided useful information which has made it possible to take action to remove some possible security risks. It would not be in the public interest for me to go into detail on this.

Q. 6 Was Blunt the "Fourth Man"?

A. Let me put it this way: like Burgess, Maclean and Philby, he was a Russian spy.

\* ~ ~ \* Passage deleted and  
-1- closed under FOI Exemption  
(Wayland, 11 March 2014





Q. 7 Was it Blunt's help that enabled Burgess and Maclean to defect before Maclean could be interrogated?

A. No. It was Philby's warning that led Burgess and Maclean to defect when they did, though Blunt assisted in the arrangements through his old contacts with Russian intelligence.

Q. 8 Did Blunt use information obtained from the Security Service to warn Burgess and Maclean?

A. No. The evidence is that Burgess told Blunt that Maclean was under suspicion.

Q. 9 Did Blunt help Philby to defect?

A. No.

Q. 10 When did Blunt cease to be a Russian spy?

A. Blunt has said that he has had no contacts with the Russians since 1956. We have no information to the contrary.

Q. 11 Did Blunt occupy a flat with Lord Rothschild during the War?

A. He lived during the war with others in a flat of which the lease was held by Lord Rothschild. Lord Rothschild was not himself living in the flat during that period.

Q. 12 Did Burgess, the present Lady Rothschild and Lady Llewelyn-Davies share this flat with Blunt?

A. Yes. Both Lady Rothschild and Lady Llewelyn-Davies have given the security authorities an account of their acquaintance with Blunt and Burgess, and have co-operated fully in investigations.

Q. 13 Why was the case of Blunt never referred to the Security Commission?

A. I cannot answer for previous Administrations. But it has to be remembered that Blunt did not confess until 1964, nearly twenty years after he left the Security Service. Security procedures in all the relevant services had already been extensively reviewed and overhauled in the light of the defections of Burgess and Maclean, and later of Philby, and there would have been little point in a further review of events and procedures of twenty years or more earlier. It could also have been considered that a reference to the Security Commission would be likely to frustrate the main objective of granting Blunt immunity and securing a confession: that of getting from him as much information as possible to assist other





inquiries with which the Security Service was concerned. The overriding consideration was the need to discover as much as possible about the extent of RIS penetration. For this Blunt's co-operation was indispensable.

Q. 14 Why was Corporal Berry prosecuted and Blunt not?

A. Decisions to prosecute are for the Attorney General. But I would remind the hon. Gentleman that there has never been any evidence which would sustain a charge against Blunt, other than his own confession which was obtained on a promise of immunity from prosecution.

Q. 15 Does the Government accept the identification of the "Fifth Man" suggested in Boyle's book?

A. We have no evidence to support any allegation that Dr. Wilfred Mann behaved as "Basil" is said to have done, and we have no reason to doubt the truth of Dr. Mann's reported statement to the Press that the allegation is without foundation.

Q. 16 Is it true that a senior British Government official stationed in Washington, having spied for the Russians, was detected by the CIA and "turned" by them into a double agent for the CIA, without the knowledge of the British authorities?

A. No. We are satisfied that there is no truth in any part of this allegation.

Q. 17 Have the United States authorities been consulted about the allegations about "Basil" the Fifth Man?

A. In such matters we do not comment on our exchanges with foreign authorities.

Q. 18 What criminal offences did Blunt commit?

A. That is not for me to say. Only a Court of Law could decide; and the authorities are constrained from preferring any charges in view of the immunity which was granted.

Q. 19 Why has there been a "cover-up" of this matter until it was brought out into the open by publication of the book?

A. I can only answer for the situation as I found it. But <sup>immunity was given</sup> ~~the Government gave~~ ~~immunity~~ to Blunt and he has since been a source of useful information; the Government could hardly therefore take the initiative in exposing him. Others who knew or suspected were no doubt deterred by the risk of proceedings for libel.





Q.20 [Any questions about why Ministers or others did or did not act in the manner they did?]

A. The statement gives an account of what happened. I cannot answer for the reasons for what was done or not done under previous Administrations.

Q.21 Will Sir Anthony Blunt forfeit his knighthood?

A. As awards in the Royal Victorian Order are in the personal gift of The Queen, and not made on a Ministerial recommendation, that is a matter for the Palace. I understand, however, that Sir Anthony Blunt's KCVO is to be annulled.





To ask the Prime Minister, whether she will make a statement on recent evidence concerning the actions of an individual, whose name has been supplied to her, in relation to the security of the United Kingdom.

DRAFT ANSWER

The name which the hon. Gentleman has given me is that of Sir Anthony Blunt.

2. In April 1964, ~~on being given an undertaking that he would not be prosecuted if he made a confession,~~ Sir Anthony Blunt admitted to the security authorities that he had been recruited by and had acted as a talent-spotter for Russian intelligence before the war, when he was a don at Cambridge, and had passed information regularly to the Russians while he was a member of the Security Service between 1940 and 1945. *He made this admission after being given an undertaking that he would not be prosecuted.*

*April  
Parliament  
concluded.*

3. Inquiries were of course made before Blunt joined the Security Service in 1940, and he was judged a fit person. He was known to have held Marxist views at Cambridge, but the security authorities had no reason either in 1940 or at any time during his service to doubt his loyalty to his country.

4. On leaving the Security Service in 1945 Blunt reverted to his profession as an art historian. He held a number of academic appointments. He was also appointed as Surveyor of The King's Pictures in 1945, and as Surveyor of The Queen's Pictures in 1952. He was given a KCVO in 1956. On his retirement as Surveyor, he was appointed as an Adviser for The Queen's Pictures and Drawings in 1972, and he retired from this appointment in 1978.

5. He first came under suspicion in the course of the inquiries which followed the defection of Burgess and Maclean in 1951, when the Security Service was told that Burgess had said in 1937 that he was working for a secret branch of the Comintern and that Blunt was one of his sources. There was no supporting evidence for this. When confronted with it, Blunt denied it. Nevertheless the Security Service remained suspicious of him, and began an intensive and prolonged investigation of his activities. During the course of this investigation he was interviewed on eleven occasions. He persisted in his denial, and no evidence against him was obtained.



19.18.

CONFIDENTIAL

aw

PRIME MINISTER

Sir Anthony Blunt

Some of my comments on Sir Robert Armstrong's minute below, which you were unable to deal with last night, have been overtaken by events. As I mentioned to you this evening, following the publication of Mr. Leadbitter's Question in today's Order Paper, I have seen Sir Harold Wilson and Mr. Callaghan to let them know that you will be answering the Question with a substantive reply which will make it clear that Sir Anthony Blunt was the Fourth Man. They have both gone along with your intention to make your initial statement in the form of a reply to a Written Question, rather than by making an oral statement or by waiting for a supplementary to come up on an Oral Question.

The Queen has now agreed that Sir Anthony Blunt's KCVO should be annulled and that this should be announced on Thursday evening, immediately after you have answered Mr. Leadbitter's Question.

It will be necessary to make one or two small changes to the draft Answer attached to Sir Robert Armstrong's minute to take account of the wording of Mr. Leadbitter's Question, but, that apart, are you content with it?

AW.

13 November 1979

CONFIDENTIAL



- 191 **Mr Albert Roberts** (Normanton): To ask the Secretary of State for Social Services, if, in view of the severity and persistent disease of cystic fibrosis, he will give consideration to allowing free prescriptions to sufferers from the disease.  
W
- 192 **Mr Ted Leadbitter** (Hartlepool): To ask the Prime Minister, if she will make a statement on recent evidence concerning the actions of an individual, whose name has been supplied to her, in relation to the security of the United Kingdom.  
W
- 193 **Mr Patrick McNair-Wilson** (New Forest): To ask the Minister of Transport, if he is satisfied with the safety aspects of the carriage of chemicals, petroleum and other dangerous substances by rail; and if he will make a statement.  
W
- 194 **Mr Dafydd Thomas** (Merioneth): To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, if he will insure that future major statements emanating from his department will henceforward be made to the House rather than be given to the Press in the form of a Press release as was done on 1st November with regard to the question of public expenditure in Wales.  
W
- 195 **Mr Peter Robinson** (Belfast East): To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, how much each Opposition Party has received, so far in the current year, from the fund for Opposition Parties.  
W

## FRIDAY 16th NOVEMBER

- 196 **Mr Bob Cryer** (Keighley): To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what further measures are proposed to prevent nuclear war taking place by accident.  
W
- 197 **Mr Bob Cryer** (Keighley): To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he has received any confirmation of the effectiveness of safeguards against the United Kingdom becoming involved in nuclear war following the incident at Colorado Springs.  
W
- 198 **Mr David Ginsberg** (Dewsbury): To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment, if he will ensure that those authorities like Kirklees, who could be adversely affected by changes in the rate support grant distribution formula, will have the benefit as in the past of damping and safety net arrangements.  
W
- 199 **Mr Ken Woolmer** (Batley and Morley): To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment, whether those authorities like Kirklees, who could be adversely affected by changes in the rate support grant distribution formula, will have the benefit as in the past of damping and safety net arrangements.  
W
- 200 **Mr Bob Cryer** (Keighley): To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will make a statement on the part played by the early warning system at Fylingdales in the checking of the false alarm of hostilities emanating from Colorado Springs, USA.  
W
- 201 **Mr Gwilym Roberts** (Cannock): To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment, if he will now make a statement on the rate support grant for 1980-81.  
W
- 202 **Mr Robert Litherland** (Manchester Central): To ask the Secretary of State for Social Services, how much was spent per thousand of population on services provided under section 2 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons' Act 1970 by the city of Manchester, Trafford, and the counties of Lancashire and Cheshire.  
W
- 203 **Mr Gwilym Roberts** (Cannock): To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment, what plans he has for changing the methods of calculating the rate support grant to make allowance for population transfer between counties and the consequent pressure on local authority services.  
W
- 204 **Mr Gwilym Roberts** (Cannock): To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment, what plans he has to change the methods of calculating the rate support grant to encourage the provision of adequate minimum standards of services in line with the recommendations of the Green Paper Command Paper No. 6813; and if he will make a statement.  
W





CONFIDENTIAL

Prime Minister.

Mr Leadbitter spoke to me this morning and said that now that he had thought further about the matter, he proposed to put down a Question for Written Answer tonight. I told him that if he did so, you would reply to it later this week.

Are you content with the draft Answer?

AWL  
12 xi

Ref. A0635

MR. WHITMORE

Sir Anthony Blunt

The Prime Minister discussed the next steps with the Home Secretary and you and me this morning.

2. The Prime Minister and Home Secretary agreed that the intervention of Mr. Leadbitter made a statement in the fairly near future inevitable. They agreed that it would be preferable to make the statement by way of Written Answer to an arranged Question on Thursday, 15th November. It would be desirable to get the Question on to the Order Paper tomorrow, so that the Prime Minister could deal with any supplementaries on this subject tomorrow by saying that there was a Question down on the Order Paper, which she expected to be able to answer later in the week.

3. The Prime Minister and the Home Secretary agreed that, when Mr. Leadbitter came back to Mr. Chilcot, Mr. Chilcot should say that the Government had of course noticed the reports and allegations that had been published; that there were a number of things to be cleared up; and that the Government hoped to be able to say something later in the week. It was agreed that Mr. Leadbitter could be invited to put down a Question to the Prime Minister for Written Answer later in the week. The form of words already prepared should be suggested to Mr. Leadbitter.

4. This afternoon you and I discussed the draft Answer with the Permanent Under Secretary of State, Home Office, the Legal Secretary to the Law Officers, the Director General of the Security Service and The Queen's Private Secretary. I attach the draft as agreed at that meeting, for the Prime Minister's approval.

5. We agreed that the general objective should be to stand on the statement and not be drawn into answering further questions from the Press. We recognised that in practice there would be some questions, in the House of Commons if not in the Press, to which answers should be given. I shall be sending you later revised notes for supplementaries on this basis.



Passages deleted and closed under  
FOI Exemption.

Wayland

11 March 2014

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re warned  
until we  
see MI  
advisers  
question on  
the Order  
page.

7. The meeting discussed the list of people who should be warned in advance of the Prime Minister's statement. You and I between us were to warn previous Prime Ministers. Sir Brian Cubbon would warn previous Home Secretaries and (as necessary) his own predecessors. Mr. Beckett, the Legal Secretary to the Law Officers, would warn previous Attorneys General.

The Security

Service would forewarn Washington. It was agreed that I should speak to Sir Anthony Blunt's solicitor, Mr. Michael Rubinstein, and to Lord Rothschild.

RA

(Robert Armstrong)

12th November, 1979





To ask the Prime Minister, whether she will make a statement on recent reports that Sir Anthony Blunt was an agent of the Russian Intelligence Service?

DRAFT ANSWER

In April 1964, on being given an undertaking that he would not be prosecuted if he made a confession, Sir Anthony Blunt admitted to the security authorities that he had been recruited by and had acted as a talent-spotter for Russian intelligence before the war, when he was a don at Cambridge, and had passed information regularly to the Russians while he was a member of the Security Service between 1940 and 1945.

2. Inquiries were (of course) made before Blunt joined the Security Service in 1940, and he was judged a fit person. He was known to have held Marxist views at Cambridge, but the security authorities had no reason either in 1940 or at any time during his service to doubt his loyalty to his country.

3. On leaving the Security Service in 1945 Blunt reverted to his profession as an art historian. He held a number of academic appointments. He was also appointed as Surveyor of The King's Pictures in 1945, and as Surveyor of The Queen's Pictures in 1952. He was given a KCVO in 1956. On his retirement as Surveyor, he was appointed as an Adviser for The Queen's Pictures and Drawings in 1972, and he resigned this appointment in 1978.

4. He first came under suspicion in the course of the inquiries which followed the defection of Burgess and Maclean in 1951, when the Security Service was told that Burgess had said in 1937 that he was working for a secret branch of the Comintern and that Blunt was one of his sources. There was no supporting evidence for this. When confronted with it, Blunt denied it. Nevertheless the Security Service remained suspicious of him, and began an intensive and prolonged investigation of his activities. During the course of this investigation he was interviewed on eleven occasions. He persisted in his denial, and no evidence against him was obtained.

5. The inquiries which preceded the exposure and defection of Philby in January 1963 produced nothing which implicated Blunt. Early in 1964, new information was received which directly implicated Blunt. It did not, however, provide a basis on which charges could be brought. The then Attorney General





decided in April 1964, after consultation with the Acting Director of Public Prosecutions, that the public interest lay in trying to secure a confession from Blunt, in order not only to arrive at a definite conclusion on his involvement but also to obtain his co-operation in the continuing investigations by the security authorities, following the defections of Burgess, Maclean and Philby, into Soviet penetration of the security and intelligence services and other public services during and after the war. Accordingly the Attorney General authorised the offer of immunity from prosecution to Blunt if he confessed. Blunt then admitted to the security authorities that, like his friends Burgess, Maclean and Philby, he had become an agent of Russian Intelligence and had talent-spotted for them at Cambridge during the 1930s; that he had regularly passed information to the Russians while he was a member of the Security Service; and that, although after 1945 he was no longer in a position to supply the Russians with classified information, in 1951 he used his old contact with the Russian Intelligence Service to assist in the arrangements for the defection of Burgess and Maclean. Both at the time of his confession and subsequently Blunt provided useful information about Russian intelligence activities and about his association with Burgess, Maclean and Philby.

6. The Queen's Private Secretary was informed in April 1964 both of Blunt's confession and of the immunity from prosecution on the basis of which it had been made. Blunt was not required to resign his appointment in the Royal Household, which was unpaid. It carried with it no access to classified information and no risk to security, and the security authorities thought it desirable not to put at risk his co-operation in their continuing investigations.

7. The decision to offer immunity from prosecution was taken because intensive investigation from 1951 to 1964 had produced no evidence to support charges. Successive Attorneys General in 1972, in June 1974 and in June 1979 have agreed that, having regard to the immunity granted in order to obtain the confession which has always been and still is the only firm evidence against Blunt, there are no grounds on which criminal proceedings could be instituted.



CONFIDENTIAL

S

Ref. A0629

9th November, 1979

When we met this morning we discussed the implications of Mr. Ted Leadbitter's telephone call to the Home Secretary's Private Office, asking to know what action or notice the Home Secretary proposed to take in respect of Press reports that Anthony Blunt was the "Fourth Man". Mr. Leadbitter had declared his intention of tabling a Parliamentary Question if the answer was unsatisfactory. We agreed that the Home Secretary's Private Secretary should persuade Mr. Leadbitter to wait until Monday, 12th November, for his answer.

This development obviously brings much closer the prospect of the Prime Minister having to make a statement. I do not yet know when she will want to do so, and what form she will want it to take. I have, however, thought it worth while reviewing the draft statement we already have, and bringing it up to date in case we need it quickly.

I attach a copy of the draft herewith. You and I, and Bill Beckett and Howard Smith, to whom I am copying this letter and the draft, are to meet on 12th November at 3.00 pm to discuss the draft. We could perhaps look again at the supplementary material, though my impression is that that can stand more or less as it is, subject to one change in the answer to the supplementary question about the Fifth Man.

Sir Brian Cubbon, KCB



To ask the Prime Minister, whether she will make a statement on recent <sup>press</sup> reports <sup>concerning</sup> that Sir Anthony Blunt ~~was an agent of the Russian Intelligence Service?~~

DRAFT ANSWER

In April 1964, on being given an undertaking that he would not be prosecuted <sup>if he makes a confession</sup> on the basis of what he said, Sir Anthony Blunt admitted to the security authorities that he had been recruited by and had acted as a talent-spotter for Russian intelligence before the war, when he was a don at Cambridge, and had passed information regularly to the Russians while he was a member of the Security Service between 1940 and 1945.

2. Inquiries were of course made before Blunt joined the Security Service in 1940, and he was judged a fit person. He was known <sup>have held</sup> to hold Marxist views at Cambridge, but <sup>the security authorities have</sup> there was <sup>in 1940</sup> no reason either then or at any time during his service to doubt his loyalty to his country.

3. On leaving the Security Service in 1945 Blunt reverted to his profession as an art historian. He held a number of academic appointments. He was also appointed as Surveyor of The King's Pictures in 1945, and as Surveyor of The Queen's Pictures in 1952. He was given a KCVO in 1956. On his retirement as Surveyor, he was appointed as an honorary Adviser for The Queen's Pictures and Drawings in 1972, and he resigned this appointment in 1978.

4. He first came under suspicion in the course of the inquiries which followed the defection of Burgess and Maclean in 1957, when the Security Service <sup>was told</sup> received an allegation that Burgess had said in 1937 that he was working for a secret branch of the Comintern and that Blunt was one of his sources. There was no supporting evidence for this ~~allegation~~. When confronted with it, Blunt denied it, adding that he had understood that Burgess was an agent of British intelligence, and had given him assistance in that belief. Nevertheless, the Security Service remained suspicious of him, and began an intensive and prolonged investigation of his activities. During the course of this investigation he was interviewed on eleven occasions. He persisted in his denial, and no evidence against him was obtained.



5. The inquiries which preceded the exposure and defection of Philby in January 1963 produced nothing which implicated Blunt. Early in 1964, ~~however~~ new information was received which directly implicated Blunt. It did not, however, provide a basis on which charges could be brought. The then Attorney General decided in April 1964, after consultation with the Acting Director of Public Prosecutions, that the public interest lay in trying to secure a confession from Blunt, in order not only to arrive at a definite conclusion on his involvement but also to ~~discover whether he knew of others in the security and intelligence Services or in public positions whose loyalty could not be relied upon.~~ Accordingly the Attorney General authorised the offer of immunity from prosecution to Blunt if he confessed. Blunt then admitted to the Security authorities that, like his friends Burgess, Maclean and Philby, he had become an agent of Russian Intelligence and had talent-spotted for them at Cambridge during the 1930s; that he had regularly passed information to the Russians while he was a member of the Security Service; and that, although after 1945 he <sup>was</sup> no longer <sup>in a position to supply the Russians with</sup> had access to classified information, <sup>in 1951 he</sup> he had remained in touch with the Russian Intelligence Service and had used <sup>his old</sup> these <sup>contacts</sup> contacts to assist <sup>in the arrangements for</sup> the defection of Burgess and Maclean. Both at the time of his confession and subsequently Blunt provided useful information about Russian intelligence activities and about his association with Burgess, Maclean and Philby. ~~His confession did not implicate anyone else, but it enabled action to be taken to remove some possible security risks.~~

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6. The Queen's Private Secretary was informed in April 1964 both of Blunt's confession and of the immunity from prosecution on the basis of which it had been made.

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# I'm not



KIM PHILBY

# AN ATOM SPY? NOT ME SAYS DOCTOR WILFRID



GUY BURGESS

# the Fifth Man

**BRILLIANT** British-born physicist Dr Wilfrid Basil Mann protested yesterday that he was not the Fifth Man in the Kim Philby affair.

Dr Mann, who knew Philby and Guy Burgess, both Soviet spies, poured scorn on the suggestion that he was the mysterious man known as 'Basil'.

'Basil', according to author Andrew Boyle, helped Donald Maclean to steal atomic secrets while the diplomat was First Secretary at the British Embassy in Washington 30 years ago.

'You really must believe me when I tell you on my word of honour that I never even knew Maclean,' said 71-year-old Dr Mann.

But as the balding scientist poured me a sherry in the elegant lounge of his £100,000 Tudor-style house in Washington, he seemed under no illusion as to who had tried to brand him a traitor.

From FRANK THOMPSON in Washington

The source 'of this lie' is, he suspects, none other than Kim Philby, the Soviet agent who rose high in the ranks of the British Secret Service and followed Burgess and Maclean into exile in Moscow after his cover was blown.

'As I am still restricted by the Official Secrets Act, I prefer not to go into any details,' said Dr Mann, who was born in Surrey but became an American citizen 20 years ago.

## Brilliant

'Suffice to say Philby has no reason whatever to like me. I am pretty certain that, safe in the Soviet Union, he is trying mischievously to link me to the affair.'

The theory of 'Basil' the Fifth Man rests upon the premise that Maclean, who was not a scientist, needed someone to guide him through the material he was able to read at the American Atomic Energy Commission — to which he, almost uniquely, had a 'non-escort access' pass.

In Mr Boyle's book, *A Climate of Treason*, he does

not identify the Fifth Man but refers to him only as 'Basil'.

'Basil,' he says, was a pleasant Englishman who was uncovered by a Jewish Intelligence agency working in London.

They passed on the information to Jim Angleton, brilliant American counter Intelligence chief, who quickly broke 'Basil'.

'Basil', the book claims, was turned into a double agent.

U.S. Intelligence were then able to control and manipulate every scrap of information that Maclean — in later years drink-prone and nervous — fed to his insatiable Soviet spymasters.

In return for his co-operation 'Basil' was apparently given immunity—and American citizenship.

Dr Mann remembers Jim Angleton from those far off days, and admits to still being in touch with him.

He refused to elaborate on his exact relationship with Mr Angleton, implying it was through his work and explaining again that the Official Secrets Act is involved.

But the relationship is such

that after my first meeting with Dr Mann last week, he contacted Angleton.

'We discussed the inference that I was being linked with "Basil" and we agreed it was ridiculous,' Dr Mann volunteered yesterday.

Mr Angleton would say only: 'I have nothing to say — nothing at all.'

Dr Mann, his black Labrador at his heels, repeatedly denied during talks at his home that he was the Fifth Man. He also denies knowing or having met Maclean.

He did, however, know Philby. They were based in the Embassy and sometimes had dinner together. He also knew Burgess, and the brilliant but scruffy and often drunken diplomat gave him a cartoon he had drawn.

## Nuclear

The doctor laughed as he produced it, signed by Burgess to him and showing Russian dictator Joe Stalin eating a coffee table.

'It was inevitable that I knew these two characters because they were both in Washington while I was there,' he said. 'But Maclean . . . never. Never.'

At one stage Dr Mann produced a statement which he said had been drafted with the help of his lawyer after my first visit to him.

It said: 'I understand that the publication (of Boyle's book) has prompted efforts to identify me as the nuclear physicist who functioned as a Soviet spy.'

'I deplore these efforts. The attempted identification is completely unwarranted by the facts.' Dr Mann had deleted the word 'false' from the typed statement to insert the words 'unwarranted by the facts.'

The statement went on: 'Between 1949 and 1951 I was attached to the British Embassy in Washington as a nuclear physicist.'

'I was not engaged in joint nuclear research in Washington during 1947.'

## Puzzled

'I was stationed in Canada at that time at the National Research Council laboratories at Chalk River, and also represented the United Kingdom on the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission's scientific and technical committee.'

'I was not given American citizenship in exchange for spying. As an employee of the National Bureau of Standards, I decided of my own volition to apply for citizenship in 1959.'

'I might add that I was awarded the United States Medal of Freedom in 1948 when I was still working in Canada.'

'It also happens that my middle name is Basil. It would seem, therefore, to be a little unusual to say the least to use such a naively revealing code name.'

The quiet, almost shy Dr



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'I might add that I was awarded the United States Medal of Freedom in 1948 when I was still working in Canada.'

'It also happens that my middle name is Basil. It would seem, therefore, to be a little unusual to say the least to use such a naively revealing code name.'

The quiet, almost shy, Dr Mann still works in the radio activity unit at the U.S. Bureau of Standards outside Washington.

He insists that he is not too angry about his name being linked to that of 'Basil'—'just very very puzzled, completely at a loss to understand it'.



CONFIDENTIAL

1.  
Security

Ref. A0610

MR. WHITMORE

*We will wait a few more days!*

*MT.*

The Climate of Treason

*Attorney.* The Attorney General has now been consulted and has given his views on the three points in paragraph 3 of the minute I sent you earlier today.

2. On the first question, he takes the view that the Prime Minister should not be prevented from making a statement about Blunt by the possibility that he might contemplate legal proceedings. Indeed he goes further: he considers that it would be the duty of the Government, knowing what it does, to make it clear to Blunt that it was bound to disclose what it knows, and thus in effect to prevent him from taking such proceedings. It follows from this that, if the Prime Minister decides to make a statement (or give a substantive answer to a Question), Blunt must be told beforehand.

3. On the second question the Attorney General believes that the Prime Minister need not be inhibited by the likelihood of legal proceedings by \* ~ \* from stating, in reply to a direct Question, that the suggestion that \* ~ \* was a Soviet agent is new to the security authorities and there is no evidence in their possession to support it. If she makes a statement about Blunt, however, the statement itself should be confined to Blunt and should not volunteer information about the Fifth Man.

4. On the third question, the Attorney General takes the view that any legal proceedings instituted by \* ~ \* would not be prejudiced by a statement about Blunt.

5. I am now proposing to bring up to date the material already prepared, in consultation with those concerned.

6. I believe that, as things have now developed, a statement about Blunt has become virtually inevitable. If the Prime Minister shares this view, it will be for consideration whether to wait for a Member of Parliament to put down a Question, or whether to volunteer a statement. The draft already prepared is

\* ~ \* Names deleted and retained under Section 3(4).

Olwayland  
11 March 2014



CONFIDENTIAL

really too long for an answer to an Oral Question; an oral statement would allow scope for wide-ranging supplementaries; would there be something to be said for a Written Answer to an arranged Question?

RA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

8th November, 1979

Prime Minister.

There is much to be said for a Written Answer to an arranged Question: it allows you to make the first public statement on the issue at a time and in a manner of your own choosing. But it would no doubt be followed by Oral Questions.

If you prefer a Written Answer, the draft that has already been prepared can probably stand, subject to some updating: there is, in my view, some advantage in giving a fairly full account of the sequence of events. But if you prefer to answer an Oral Question or to make a statement, you will no doubt want a shorter reply than the present draft.





CONFIDENTIAL

Ref. A0609

MR. WHITMORE

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The Climate of Treason

Mr. Andrew Boyle's book has now been published. As expected he claims to have discovered that there were two further Soviet agents associated with Burgess, Maclean and Philby. They are code-named "Maurice" and "Basil". Inevitably they are described as the Fourth and Fifth Men. They are not identified in the book, but there has been widespread speculation in the Press about their identities and an article in Private Eye has drawn attention to the clues in the book which point to the identification of Sir Anthony Blunt with "Maurice". It concludes that it is clear, as far as Andrew Boyle and Fleet Street are concerned, the blunt truth is that "Maurice" = Sir Anthony Blunt.

2. This development clearly brings a long step nearer the situation when someone puts down a Question to the Prime Minister to which it may be difficult not to give a substantive Answer. As the Prime Minister knows, there has been much preparation for that situation and the material is all ready to hand.

3. There are, however, three points on which I have warned the Attorney General's Office that I think the Prime Minister will need advice, as she considers whether to make a statement:-

- (i) It seems unlikely that Blunt will take legal action against the author and publishers of the book. If he were doing so, it would presumably be wrong for the Prime Minister to make a substantive statement. Before deciding to make such a statement, should the Prime Minister take steps to find out whether Sir Anthony Blunt is in fact contemplating legal action? We know who Sir Anthony Blunt's legal adviser is and as he happens to be a friend of mine there would be no difficulty about getting in touch with him.
- (ii) Any questions about Blunt are likely to be accompanied or followed by questions about the identification of the Fifth Man suggested in Boyle's book. As the Prime Minister knows, we have no reason to think that that identification is right. Hitherto the proposal has been that, if she is





CONFIDENTIAL

asked about that suggestion, she should say that it is new to the Security authorities and there is no evidence in their possession to support it. We have reason to think that the man concerned is contemplating legal action. That being so, can the Prime Minister properly give such an answer?

- (iii) Given the likelihood of legal proceedings by the man alleged to be the Fifth Man, is there a danger that any substantive statement the Prime Minister might make about the Fourth Man could be held to prejudice those proceedings?

4. I am seeking early guidance on these questions. In the meantime the Prime Minister needs to be advised how she should deal with any supplementary Questions in the House of Commons this afternoon on these matters. It would clearly be wrong to make a substantive statement in response to a supplementary Question. Any such Questions could be turned by reference to the possibility of legal proceedings, on the lines of the draft forms of words attached. Any other form of temporising reply is almost bound either to invite someone to put down a Question or to commit the Prime Minister to a further statement. The reference to legal proceedings is colourable in the short term, because one of the Private Eye reports refers to the "cascade of writs" planned to descend on Andrew Boyle. But the Prime Minister should be aware that it is slightly disingenuous, because:

- (i) As far as we know, there have been no writs as yet, and none of these matters is technically sub judice;
- (ii) the Attorney General is likely to advise that, if Blunt was thought likely to contemplate legal proceedings against Boyle, Her Majesty's Government could not stand by and in effect be party to the possibility of injustice being done and would therefore have to take steps which would prevent Blunt taking proceedings.

So the "legal proceedings" line will not hold matters for very long. But it will probably just about do, for this afternoon.

RA

8th November, 1979

(Robert Armstrong)





Possible Supplementary Questions and Answers

Q. 1 Will the Prime Minister comment on a recent book which discloses the existence of a Fourth and Fifth Man who acted as Soviet agents during and after the war?

A. I understand that the author of the book to which the hon. Member refers claims to have discovered that there were two other men besides Burgess, Maclean and Philby, who were Russian agents during and after the war, but that neither is named in the book. I am also aware that there have been Press reports speculating on the identities of those concerned. I am not prepared to comment on these matters at this time. There is, of course the possibility that they may become the subject of legal proceedings.

Q. 2 Has the Government conducted any enquiries on its own account into the recently published reports that there were other people, beyond those already known, who were Soviet agents during and immediately after the war?

A. Yes. We have of course done so. I do not however propose to comment in any way at this time on these matters. There is, of course, the possibility that they may become the subject of legal proceedings.

Q. 3 Was Sir Anthony Blunt a Soviet agent?

A. I am aware of the publications and speculations which have no doubt given rise to this Question, but I am not prepared to comment on these matters at this time. There is, of course, the possibility that they may become the subject of legal proceedings.



# London Diary

As Chairman Hua achieved lift-off amid tremendous salvos of acclaim and saliva, I was given the transcript of a recent trial in Peking. The defendant, Wei Jingsheng, drew a stiff sentence for conversing with foreigners during the Sino-Vietnamese war and thereby breaching China's version of the Official Secrets Act. He pointed out in his defence speech that mentioning the name of a Chinese general to a diplomat was hardly classified information, but Mr William Whitelaw and the Chinese judiciary are at one about what constitutes a secret. They also seem to agree about what Wei Jingsheng calls 'Democratic socialism'. Very dangerous stuff indeed, for the promulgation of which he and his paper were prosecuted. It really is intolerable that we on the Left, who have defended Rudolf Bahro and others almost alone, are accused by the Tories and the press of wanting 'an East European state', while the Thatchers and Carringtons cast their votes in favour of Pol Pot at the United Nations. Who dares to talk of double standards in this context? Not that the Conservatives are entirely inconsistent. Their policy of loving up to Chile, and of ending the aid programme for South American refugees, sits very well with their general line on the rights of man. Still, it must make some kind of foreign policy record to be grovelling to Pinochet and Pol Pot at the same time.

What's come over Roy Hattersley? His sense of proportion seems to have deserted him entirely. He oozes around the place calling for Labour's moderates to unite - you must have noticed him. But last week he made a terrible fuss about having to speak second to David Owen at the Cambridge Union. Alas for Ratters, somebody has to speak last, and the committee decided on Owen as having held the senior ministerial post. Hattersley, who had already agreed to be billed, complained a lot about this but did not actually withdraw until three hours before the debate was due to start. Two points here. One, it's really bad manners to treat student audiences in this way, when they have such a hard time getting front bench speakers. Royboy would not have relished the straw poll I took among Cambridge Fabians about his prospects, general bearing and so forth. Second, this sort of thing does great harm to the cause of Labour moderation. In desperation at the last minute, the Union asked me instead.

Talking of moderates (and who isn't these days?) I have a small suggestion for a realignment of the centre-Right. In Sir Cecil Parrott's fine biography of Jaroslav Hasek, creator of the Good Soldier Schweik, he tells some stories of Hasek's own political adventures. It seems that, in the Austro-Hungarian elections of 1911, Hasek and some cronies formed and registered the Party of Moderate Progress within the Bounds of Law. Its election platform was a flawless exercise in social democracy.

Article One. Moderate Progress within the Bounds of Law.

Article Two. Greater Strictness with the Poor.

Article Three. Nationalisation of House Porters and Sextons.

New Statesman 9 November 1979

Article Four. Down with Fay Creditors.

Article Five. Credit Banks to be placed in the hands of the clergy. This programme would need very little updating to get say, William Rodgers to meet the challenge of the Eighties. But if one is looking for a real Schweikian leader of all that is most base, chubby and opportunist in British affairs, I am afraid that the palm can only be awarded to one man. . . .

Scorning the charge of elitism, I have always regarded football as a reactionary sport, not to mention a boring one. The sight of Ian Smith in the Crystal Palace directors' box for the 'Big Match' last weekend did nothing to correct my deviation. Not only did the man earn himself a few flattering camera-angles during the game, but he was given the chance to deliver a short burst into the microphone afterwards. In the nature of these occasions it was possible for him to affect a certain 'good fellow' style as a result. So I found myself ringing Mr Raymond Bloye, chairman of Crystal Palace, on Monday. Whose idea had the invitation been? 'We get somebody every week . . . we're absolutely non-political . . . we just cater for football'. Yes, but who had invited him? 'He was at Tottenham last week . . . there's nothing unusual about this'. Mr Bloye, did he get invited or did he just come? 'I can't see what difference that makes.' I can. 'Well, as far as I know it was all arranged by the CID.' Oh I see.

Let us throw hypocrisy to the winds. In Andrew Boyle's *Climate of Treason*, which describes but does not name two senior 'moles', the real position is as follows. 'Maurice' is Sir Anthony Blunt, formerly Keeper of the Queen's Pictures and a distinguished art historian in his own right. 'Basil' is Dr Wilfred Mann, a modestly obscure physicist. Both men, as far as anybody can tell, are wholly innocent. The source for 'Maurice' is Goronwy Rees, who having written a book of his own on the affair is choosing an odd time to make this disclosure through a third party. The source for 'Basil' is James Angleton, the paranoid former head of the CIA who claims that he turned Wilfred Mann into a loyal double (or triple) agent for 'our side'. I can only add one small fragment to this mound of dead dogs and petty sneaking. Sir Anthony Blunt's entry in *Who's Who* comprises a fairly decent Foreign Office record, and a huge list of books published under his name. In amongst the volumes on Poussin and other painters is a work entitled *Picasso's Guernica*. If that doesn't prove it, I don't know what does.

It is not the policy of this column to print 'plugs' for anybody. But if you don't read *Fire Force Exposed* (Anti-Apartheid Movement £1.95) you will have a hard time understanding why the armed forces are such an issue in the Zimbabwe talks. And if you don't get *West Irian, East Timor and Indonesia* (Minority Rights Group 75p) you will go about thinking that Cambodia is the only current genocide in Asia. Reading what the 'moderates' can get up to when unobserved is an experience nobody should deny themselves. And had it occurred to you what sinister initials the Selous Scouts have?

Did the Americans know that the Shah had cancer all along? The answer, given the pre-

dominance of Americans in Middle East medicine, must be 'yes'. (The answer would of course mean that all that intelligence money was wasted.) So they let a dying iac shoot thousands of his own people streets. Fair enough. But did they, I would tell David Owen and the British Foreign Office? That tricky moment last spring, the Americans were edging away and the British were left holding the puking takes on a new reality in the light of the reaper. Who'd be a poodle?

I was in Ankara last week, surveying of the less-noticed tragedies of the European Left. There was the wreckage of Ecevit's government, after nearly four years of compromise and drift. There was the and gloating reactionary majority, unable to believe its luck. There was the population buffeted by inflation and shortage, and even to buy the traditional coffee because of the black market. There were the forces waiting in the wings, with all the gruesome panoply of violence and racial supremacy. There were the unions, still bruised from a mixture of 'restraint', 'loyalty' and shop steward revolt. There were the men from the East applying the standard mixture of deflationary monetarism which is held to work for every country from Tanzania to Portugal. And there was Ecevit himself, faced with the resignation of his party executive, angrily denying the necessity for a special party congress to discuss the debacle, but forced into holding one against his will. Then I came home. I still think what it was reminding me of.

If asked for an opinion on liturgy and the glory of the language, among the last people who would consult would be Ted Short (moralistic), Michael Foot (verbal diarrhoea) and Lord Carrington (slippery usage) or William Whitelaw (flannelling fool). Yet all these things Glenda Jackson and Alan Bennett, having moved to defend the Book of Common Prayer and the Authorised Version of the Bible against the mealy-mouthed revisions imposed by Canterbury. Many people feel instinctive support of this petition, because it purports to uphold the muscularity of English against the limp-wrists and lame-brains of the Continent. I'm sure they are wrong. Like those who mourn the Latin Mass, these people are admitting that religious belief is less convincing if not expressed in sonorous and admiring terms. Nothing can take Cranmer away from the formation of our usage. But 'the mediocrity of our native church' forfeited its right to it a very long time ago.

Christopher Hitchcock

## This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 token for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

I should like to nominate Mr Ian Smith as the Man of the Year. Leaving aside the political involvement in Rhodesia, on which I am not competent to comment, it is a pleasant change to find a man in political life today who will stand up for his beliefs. - Letter in *Daily Telegraph* (T. E. F.)

There are real live negro extras, economising on the universal black body market. - *Guardian* (A. J. Dunn)



FROM THE PRESS SECTION

Date..... 9. NOV. 1979..

PRIVATE EYE

AUBERON LAUGH'S DIARY

THE REFORM CLUB is full of excitement, with fat lawyers giggling nervously in every corner as they are consulted by elderly, highly scented M15 and M16 executives about the cascade of writs planned to descend on Andrew Boyle, following the publication of his book *The Climate of Treason*.

Boyle treats of the "fourth man" in the Burgess-Maclean-Philby affair, and although he does not name the fellow apart from the code name "Maurice", enterprising lawyers have suggested that the book could be misread to imply that "Maurice" was none other than Sir Anthony Blunt, the immensely distinguished 72-year-old art expert and authority on Poussin who is Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures.

The suggestion is of course laughable. Sir Anthony, apart from anything else, is an Old Marlburghian. This distinguished bachelor worked in M15 during the war, and is easily identifiable as the model for John Le Carré's George Smiley. Le Carré's "mole", cunningly disguised by Boyle as "Maurice", is unmistakably identified in Graham Greene's last novel *The Human Factor* as being Sir Maurice "Boris" Oldfield, the former M16 supremo recently appointed as Mrs Thatcher's Dzerzhinsky-Beria figure in Ulster.

Sir Fred Warner, newly elected Euro-MP for Somerset and former Ambassador to Japan, is 61.



FROM THE PRESS SECTION

- 9 NOV 1979  
Date.....

PRIVATE EYE NO 467

Ever since the *Eye* two issues ago revealed the agitated interest of his lawyer Michael Rubinstein over the forthcoming publication of Andrew Boyle's book *The Climate of Treason*, squads of Fleet Street hacks have been pursuing an increasingly elusive Sir Anthony Blunt, adviser for the Queen's Pictures and Drawings. This hunt for Blunt intensified when, a week before publication day (5 November), the *Observer* ran a front-page story telling how Boyle's book revealed as part of the Burgess-Maclean-Philby story that there had been a Fourth and a Fifth Man who had provided information to Russia and who had been pardoned. Neither man is named in the book.

A team from the *News of the World* sought out Sir Anthony. So too did another from the *Daily Mail*. All without success. American newspapers too joined the hunt. For at least part of this time, ironically, Blunt was with his old friend Lord Hartwell, proprietor of the *Daily* and *Sunday Telegraph*, which had declined to serialise the book.

The reason for all this attention was the firm conviction on the part of the fearless news hounds that the Fourth Man, whom Boyle refers to by his code name of "Maurice" and whose tip-off enabled Burgess and Maclean to escape, was in fact this long-standing member of the Royal Household. One American correspondent even went so far as to say so in a story cabled from London, only to have his newspaper delete the name pending publication and/or confirmation in Britain. Such publication seems somewhat unlikely at present, given our draconian libel laws and the cloaking of the whole story by the Official Secrets Act.

But why should it be that so many eager spy hunters should have this idea about a prominent art historian honoured by his country? The answer can be found in the trail of clues left by Boyle's reference to "Maurice" in his book. Consider the following:

"Maurice" was an intimate associate of Guy Burgess at Cambridge.

So was Blunt.

"Maurice" was, according to Goronwy Rees, a man of "erudition", i.e. an Academic. Blunt was a Fellow of Trinity College Cambridge 1932-1936.

"Maurice" was a homosexual.

So is Blunt.

"Maurice" enlisted in the army in 1939.

So did Blunt.

"Maurice's" prosecution", says Boyle, "could have embroiled many eminent people, perhaps even the Royal Family itself." (*Eye italics.*)

Blunt is the only character in Boyle's story with Royal connections.

Appearing in BBC Radio's "The World At One" on 1 November, Boyle provided some further clues when pressed by Robin Day. He was asked whether "Maurice" was "a titled gentleman".

Answer - Yes.

He was asked whether he had been employed by the Royal Family.

Answer - Yes.

Finally, there is perhaps the biggest clue or red herring of all - the call from Michael Rubinstein to Boyle's publishers, indicating that Blunt understood he was about to be libelled.

Putting all these factors together, it is clear that, as far as Andrew Boyle and Fleet Street

are concerned, the Blunt truth is that "Maurice" = Sir Anthony Blunt.

And that would explain why, while lesser mortals received sentences of 10 to 20 years for handing over documents, and a key traitor such as George Blake was jailed for 42 years, "Maurice" was able to confess and walk away.

For at that time in the late 'fifties Blunt had recently been knighted (1956) and was employed as Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures. The scandal would have been even greater than that which had been caused by Burgess and Maclean's flight to Russia or was later caused by Philby's escape there. Furthermore, the news would not have been taken lightly at Buckingham Palace. For as the Queen Mother once declared, a remark relayed back to Blunt, when talking about Burgess and Maclean: "The one person I cannot stand is a traitor."



## 2 More Britons Spied With Philby, New Book Says

By James le Moyne

Special to The Washington Post

LONDON, Oct. 27—A new book about to be published here reopens the spy scandal involving Soviet agents inside the British government — Kim Philby, Guy Burgess and Donald MacLean — with new allegations that two other Britons spied for Russians in the case.

"The Climate of Treason," by the respected British biographer Andrew Boyle, says one of the hitherto unpublicized Soviet spies helped British diplomats Burgess and MacLean escape to Russia in 1951.

Boyle says the other Soviet agent was discovered and "turned" by the CIA, which used him to help uncover the other spies in the Philby case and to feed misinformation to the Soviets.

Burgess and MacLean both had worked in the British Embassy in Washington. Philby was head of British counterintelligence against the Soviet Union and also the British liaison with the CIA and FBI in Washington from 1949 to 1951.

After his defection in 1963, Philby was found to have been a Soviet agent for over 20 years. John le Carré's novel "Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy" is based in part on Philby's career.

Boyle, whose book is being serialized in the Sunday Observer newspaper, says he relied heavily on interviews with former CIA and British agents involved in the case. He also says he used FBI and CIA files gained under the U.S. Freedom of Information Act.

The book says one of the Soviet spies was a British physicist working on joint nuclear research in Washington in 1947. This spy, code-named "Basil," allegedly was discovered by the CIA acting on a tip from Israeli intelligence. After using "Basil" as a double agent against the Soviets, Boyle says, the CIA gave him American citizenship and he now lives in the United States.

Because of stringent British libel laws, Boyle does not name the two alleged agents except by their code names.

The other Soviet spy, Boyle says, was a British intelligence officer in London, code-named "Maurice," who warned Burgess and MacLean they were about to be arrested. The question of how they evaded arrest has long troubled students of the case.

Boyle's book says "Maurice" confessed two years after the defections. In return, and to avoid further public scandal, Boyle says, British authorities granted a pardon and "Maurice" holds a prominent place in British public life.

Although Boyle does not identify "Maurice," he describes him as a left-wing Cambridge University teacher in the 1930s who was a close friend of Burgess.

The only person mentioned in Boyle's book who could fit such a description is Sir Anthony Blunt, a former surveyor of the queen's paintings and former director of London's Courtauld Institute of Fine Art. Boyle describes Blunt as a close friend of Burgess and a former intelligence officer.

The British satire magazine *Private Eye* said in a recent issue that a libel lawyer representing Blunt called the publishers of Boyle's book, Hutchinsons, asking to see the book before it was published.

Because British libel laws prevent the naming of a person without corroborating evidence in a way that may harm his reputation, it will be hard for any British paper to name "Maurice."



TOP SECRET



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Security <sup>5</sup>

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Principal Private Secretary*

SIR JOHN HUNT

SIR ANTHONY BLUNT

The Prime Minister has seen your minute A0398 of 10 October 1979 and is grateful for your warning that interest in Sir Anthony Blunt is likely to grow with the publication in the Observer of extracts from Andrew Boyle's book.

**C. A. WHITMORE**

17 October 1979

TOP SECRET





**TOP SECRET**

Prime Minister. 4

JAW  
15x.

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Ref. A0398

MR. WHITMORE

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Sir Anthony Blunt

both attached

My minute to the Prime Minister A09495 of 8th May informed her that Sir Anthony Blunt was the Fourth Man and Annex 2 to that minute set out the details about him: and my minute A09648 of 29th May attached a possible draft statement, with Notes for Supplementaries, which might be used if and when the Blunt story became public knowledge e.g. in Andrew Boyle's book or following Blunt's death.

We now know that Andrew Boyle's book will be published early in November and that the Observer will print extracts from the book on 28th October. We think, but are not sure, that Blunt will not be identified directly as the Fourth Man but that the story will be told in such a way as to make it clear that this is what the author thinks. This is the technique which has already been used in a number of articles recently (e.g. reviews of Richard Deacon's recent book "The British Connection" and pieces in "Private Eye" on 14th and 28th September). It is difficult to predict the effect which Boyle's book will have. It is possible that, given what has already appeared recently, it will not create as big a sensation as we first thought and that there will be no need for a Government statement. Alternatively Sir Anthony Blunt may take some action himself (libel proceedings, a public confession or even suicide). I do not think that we can usefully take any further action to bring up to date the statement or the Notes for Supplementaries (which in any case require some minor amendments) until we know the situation the Government is confronted with. This minute is therefore simply to warn the Prime Minister that interest in Blunt is likely to increase following publication of the Observer extracts on 28th October.

~~\_\_\_\_\_~~

(John Hunt)

10th October, 1979



PREMIER 19/7/20

RUSSIA'S NOTORIOUS UNIVERSITY RECRUITS PHILBY, BURGESS AND MacLEAN ARE NOW CLAIMED TO BE JUST THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG

NOTHING could be more normal or innocent. A peace-loving economist from Cambridge spends his holidays mountaineering in Switzerland and meets a British naturalist who paints water colours of Alpine flowers.

Who would suspect that, under cover of chatting about the niceties of gentian and edelweiss, Professor Arthur Pigou was all the time arranging payment for arms shipments to Riga with an intermediary of the Bolshevik agent, Ossip Piatnisky?

Who indeed? But can any of the super-spies unmasked elsewhere compare with Pigou, the mild, liberal rock-climber who made little donnish jokes about ladies in knicker-bockers and who wrote his first thesis on Browning as a Religious Teacher?

Talents

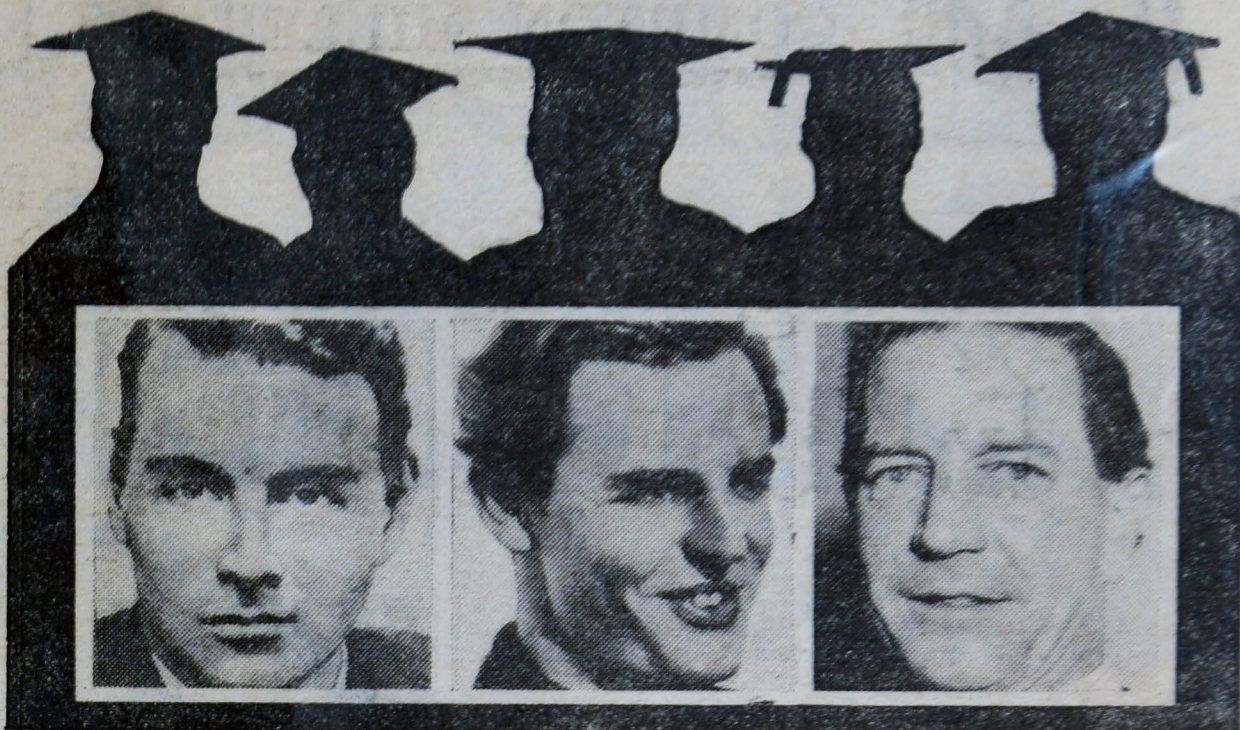
In the British Connection (Hamish Hamilton £7.95), published today, Richard Deacon suggests that for 40 years, Pigou was a Soviet agent recruiting other agents from among young Cambridge Left-wing idealists. And he says the don was one of the first to spot the talents of Guy Burgess.

Deacon says Pigou was "astonishingly deceptive." That's an understatement.

Was Pigou the Fourth Man who recruited and controlled Philby, Burgess and Maclean?

Oh, says Mr. Deacon airily, that's nothing: "What one should be looking for is not a Fourth or a Fifth Man, but for the sixth, seventh, eighth, etc."

Some of the Deacon allegations have been published in The Guardian and provoked outraged denials from Pigou's old colleagues at King's College, Cambridge — such as Lord



Graduates in treachery: Burgess, Maclean and Philby. But how many more?

# Traitors unlimited?

by

**FERDINAND MOUNT**

herring deliberately planned, for some mysterious sinister reason, via the Garrick Club.

For example, the matter of the Sensational Theft of Mr. Philip Noel-Baker's Keys — all due to Pigou, says Roger, because Pigou knew every detail about the habits of Noel-Baker (then a junior Minister in Ramsay Macdonald's government). Even where he kept his

1944-5 and that there were six names on the suspect short list — including Maclean, who was at neither

Deacon says three of the names — Paul Gore-Booth, Roger Makins and Michael Wright — were ruled out as entirely above suspicion.

The other two "more likely suspects" were Lord Inverchapel, British Ambassador to both Washington and Moscow (whom Deacon

through his ex-Cambridge contacts in the organisation."

Now, according to Deacon, Tomas Harris—who is dead —was, apart from being a great collector of Spanish art, also a brilliant Triple Cross Soviet agent. Does Deacon mean to imply then that Sir Anthony was a Soviet dupe? But since he was nothing to do with the business at all, why mention him?

And, apart from the published material about Philby, etc., where is the evidence for all these allegations?

Most of it seems to be what Mr. Deacon portentsously calls the Deacon

2000 THE LONDON MERCHANTS



Kaldor, Lord Annan and Mr. L. P. Wilkinson, the classical scholar.

Pigou, they say, did not have "a passion for Communist economics." He was in fact a highly orthodox economist of the mainstream British school and this is just another McCarthyite smear, like The Times allegation — later hurriedly apologised for — that another Cambridge don, Donald Beves, was the Fourth Man.

## Undaunted

Mr. Deacon, say his former colleagues, would not dare to make such allegations if Pigou or any other of his targets were still alive.

Undaunted, Mr. Deacon who has written histories of the Israeli, British, Russian and Chinese Secret Services, alleges that "within the next few years it is almost certain that two other ex-King's men will be revealed as those whose bogus liberalism led them to the 'treason of the clerks'".

At times you feel that Donald Beves is just about the only Cambridge don whom Mr. Deacon believes was not a spy. He derides The Times story as an improbable and ill-founded red

keys.

## Amazing

You'll never guess where he kept them . . . in his trousers — which he was in the habit of removing before retiring to bed. Amazing.

And if Mr. Deacon's evidence is not always impressive, his style is decidedly underhand.

But are Mr. Deacon's own methods of investigation any sounder? He bases many of his allegations on the evidence of a pre-war Soviet agent in Switzerland code-named Roger. Some of Roger's material is, well, not entirely impressive.

In looking for the Fourth Man in the Foreign Office, he says that the allegation by the high-placed Soviet defector Krivitsky of a second traitor there "whose name was Scottish and whose habits were Bohemian" did not refer to Maclean, because Maclean was too junior and, at the time, scarcely Bohemian in his habits.

Philby, in his memoirs, says Krivitsky had recruited a diplomat who had been educated at Eton and Oxford and who was stationed in Washington at the time of the known leakages in

goes on to accuse not only of Soviet sympathies but of sinister links with Soviet agents), and another man "who is still alive".

Anyone with reasonable knowledge of the background to all this might deduce that Deacon is referring to old X. But then, if he has the evidence, why doesn't he have the guts to name him?

Then there is the technique of half-guilt by association. Not so much a smear, more a slight smudge on a man's character. Well-known names drift in and out of Mr. Deacon's narrative and you are never quite sure why he mentions them. There was no valid reason to do so.

Take, for example, Sir Anthony Blunt, the distinguished art historian and former surveyor of the Queen's Pictures.

Deacon describes Blunt's Left-wing views as a young man and then adds: "The world of art in the late 1930s seems to have led a number of improbable recruits into the world of Intelligence, notably Tomas Harris, the art collector, and, after he had joined the Army and been evacuated from Dunkirk, Blunt himself, who was brought into MI5 largely

Papers which have been "given to the Wiener Library and Institute of Contemporary History with the proviso that they cannot be inspected for a period of ten years."

## Despise

That aside, it is now clear beyond any doubt that the Foreign Office, the Scientific Establishment and the universities throughout the 1930s and 1940s were riddled with Soviet sympathisers and that among them there were a terrifying number of actual Soviet agents.

Those spies who were caught or who fled to the East can have been only a fraction of those whose treachery was so costly to the West in terms of lives and national security.

The Americans have every right to despise the slackness of British minds and methods.

But if the history of the Great Betrayal is to be written as a reminder for posterity, then it must be properly documented and detailed.

Otherwise it will be all too easy for our grandchildren to dismiss the whole business as just a great scare.



TOP SECRET

*Security*

3



Ref. A09786

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MR. STOWE

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*JWS*  
*Pv*

Blunt

— Sir John Hunt's minute to the Prime Minister of 29th May (A09648) says that the present Attorney General has not been briefed on Sir Anthony Blunt. Sir Michael Havers has in fact now been briefed orally on the case. Perhaps you could note your papers accordingly.

*MJV*

M. J. VILE

15th June, 1979



TOP SECRET

2

Security

P.M. has seen  
k.H.S.

3/12

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Ref. A09648

PRIME MINISTER

Sir Anthony Blunt

At Annex 2 of my minute A09495 of 8th May I attached a paper about Sir Anthony Blunt who is likely to become more widely known as the Fourth Man during the course of this summer. I do not know whether you had time to study that Annex in any detail, but I feel I should draw it to your attention again for two reasons:-

- (i) The article "The Apostles' Subversive Creed" on page 22 of this morning's Guardian, while not accusing Blunt of disloyalty, mentions his connection with Guy Burgess and his interest in Marxism: and also, having said that Blunt was in MI5, talks about secret members of the Apostles extending "into spheres of activity where vital intelligence could be gleaned". Although fear of libel may stop the Press from naming Blunt directly, at least for the present, I suspect that we shall now see more innuendos of this kind.
- (ii) I understand that you will be seeing Lord Rothschild this week and he could well mention Blunt to you. Paragraphs 28 and 29 (on pages 8 and 9) of the paper on Blunt referred to above show that it was Lord Rothschild who recommended Blunt to MI5 in the first place and that in 1940 Lord Rothschild sublet his flat to Blunt who shared it with, among others, Guy Burgess and Lady Rothschild. There have never been any grounds for security concern about Lord Rothschild but he has naturally been very concerned that his name may be linked with Blunt at some stage (indeed I think Lady Rothschild still sees Blunt from time to time). Lord Rothschild has therefore been very anxious to know what the Government would say if and when the Blunt story becomes public knowledge. He mentioned this to me as recently as 14th December when he said that he and his wife ought to be given a firm steer about what they

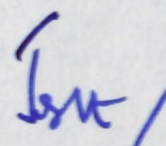


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should say if publicity seemed imminent. I said that I could not then forecast how things would develop but that we had him very much in mind as someone to warn if the full story seemed about to come out or the Government contemplated a statement. He seemed quite content to leave things on this basis.

In the last sentence of my covering minute of 8th May I said that a possible statement, with notes for supplementaries, for use if and when the Blunt story becomes public knowledge was already in draft. You may like to see them in their present form. I should however like to emphasise that they have been prepared on a contingency basis only and that I think it would be unwise to volunteer any statement unless and until it becomes necessary. This is partly because there is still some doubt about what Andrew Boyle and others will publish. But it can also be argued that the Government, having offered Blunt immunity from prosecution if he would confess and collaborate, would be breaking its side of the bargain if it took the initiative in disclosing the story and that this would make it harder to obtain confessions of this kind in the future.

This is a subject which you may want to discuss with the Home Secretary, who is also in the picture, at some stage. The present Attorney General has not to date been briefed on the matter.

  
JOHN HUNT

29th May, 1979





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DRAFT

In view of the allegations which have now been publicly made about Sir Anthony Blunt I think it is right for me to make the following statement about the security considerations involved.

Sir Anthony Blunt was a member of the Security Service from 1940 to 1945. Inquiries were made before Blunt joined the Service, and he was judged a fit person. There was no reason during his service to doubt his loyalty to this country.

In 1951 however, shortly after the defection of Burgess and Maclean, Blunt came under suspicion. In the course of fresh inquiries the Security Service received an allegation that in 1937 Burgess had said that he was working for a secret branch of the Comintern and that Blunt was one of his sources. Blunt was confronted with this allegation, for which there was no supporting evidence, and denied it adding that he had understood Burgess was an agent of British intelligence and had given him assistance in that belief. Nevertheless the Security Service remained suspicious of him and began an intensive investigation of his activities. He was kept under surveillance and he was interviewed on no less than 11 occasions in order to try and clear up the matter. No evidence against him was however obtained.

In the early 1960s a Soviet defector provided evidence which suggested that the Soviet Union had penetrated British intelligence and that Burgess and Maclean had other associates. This evidence led to the reopening of the case against Philby but contained nothing which implicated Blunt. In 1964 however new information was received which directly implicated Blunt. But it did not provide a basis on which charges could be brought. Given the fact that Blunt had already been investigated for 13 years without obtaining evidence against him, the Attorney General of the day, in April 1964, following consultation with the Acting Director of Public Prosecutions, decided that the public





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interest lay in trying to secure a confession from Blunt in order not only to arrive at a definite conclusion on his involvement but also to discover whether he knew of others in the intelligence services or in public positions whose loyalty could not be relied upon. Accordingly he authorised the offer of immunity from prosecution to Blunt if he confessed. Blunt then confessed to the authorities that, like his friends Burgess, Maclean and Philby, he had become an agent of Russian intelligence during the 1930s at Cambridge, where he talent-spotted for them, and had passed information regularly to the Russians while he was a member of the Security Service. After leaving that Service in 1945 he no longer had access to classified information but had remained in touch with the Russians and had used those contacts to assist the defection of Burgess and Maclean.

In addition to making this confession Blunt co-operated with his interrogators and both in 1964 and subsequently provided much useful information about Russian intelligence activities and about his association with Burgess, Maclean and Philby.

[The original decision to offer Blunt immunity, if he collaborated was taken because an intensive investigation from 1951 to 1964, including 11 interrogations, had produced no evidence to support charges: and because it was felt more important to try to obtain information about others who might still be in a position to do damage to the national interest. As a result of his confession action was in fact taken to remove some possible security risks. The decision not to prosecute him was reviewed in 1972 and in June 1974 by the Attorneys General of the day; both agreed that, having regard to the immunity granted in order to obtain the confession which has always been the only firm evidence against him, there were no grounds on which criminal proceedings could be instituted.]



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## Note of Possible Supplementaries and Suggested Answers

- Q.1 Was Blunt protected by former colleagues in the Security Service?
- A.1 No. Colleagues of Blunt who were interrogated in the course of investigations to which I have referred co-operated fully.
- Q.2 Is it not the fact that Goronwy Rees informed the authorities in 1951 that Burgess had told him that Blunt was a Russian agent? Why was no action taken at the time?
- A.2 Mr. Rees was the source of the allegation made to the Security Service in 1951 that Burgess had said in 1951 that Blunt was one of the sources used by Burgess for his work for the Comintern. That allegation was thoroughly examined in the course of the prolonged investigation of Blunt from 1951 onwards, but, as I have said, no supporting evidence was obtained until Blunt confessed in 1964.
- Q.3 Was the Palace informed about Blunt's record?
- A.3 The Queen's Private Secretary was informed in 1964, \* ~~~~~ \*
- Q.4 Why was Blunt allowed to continue to hold a post in the Royal Household after his past relationship with the Russian Intelligence Service was known?
- A.4 Blunt's position in the Royal Household, which was unpaid, involved no access to classified information and no risk to security. Following a promise of immunity from prosecution he had confessed and co-operated with his interrogators. The security authorities felt that it was desirable to avoid taking any action which might have put at risk his willingness to continue to provide useful information.
- Q.5 Did Blunt confess to recruiting other spies for the Russians or did he name any others whom he knew to be Russian agents?
- A.5 As I have said in my statement, in addition to making his confession, Blunt has co-operated with subsequent interrogations and has provided much useful information, which has made it possible to take action to remove some possible security risks. It would not be in the public interest for me to go into detail on this.

\* ~ \* Passage deleted and  
closed under FOI Exemption.

Wayland

11 March 2014



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- Q.6 Was Blunt the "Fourth Man"?
- A.6 Let me put it this way: like Burgess, Maclean and Philby, he was a Russian spy.
- Q.7 Did Blunt help Burgess and Maclean to defect?
- A.7 Yes. He put Burgess in touch with Russians in the United Kingdom.
- Q.8 Did Blunt use information obtained from the Security Service to warn Burgess and Maclean?
- A.8 No. The evidence is that Burgess told Blunt that Maclean was under suspicion.
- Q.9 Did Blunt help Philby to defect?
- A.9 No.
- Q.10 When did Blunt cease to be a Russian spy?
- A.10 Blunt has said that he has had no contacts with the Russians since 1956. We have no information to the contrary.
- Q.11 Did Blunt occupy a flat with Lord Rothschild during the War?
- A.11 He lived during the war with others in a flat of which the lease was held by Lord Rothschild. Lord Rothschild was not himself living in the flat during that period.
- Q.12 Did Burgess, the present Lady Rothschild and Lady Llewelyn-Davies share this flat with Blunt?
- A.12 Yes. Both Lady Rothschild and Lady Llewelyn-Davies have given the security authorities an account of their acquaintance with Blunt and Burgess, and have co-operated fully in investigations.
- Q.13 Why was the case of Blunt never referred to the Security Commission?
- A.13 I cannot answer for previous Administrations. But a reference to the Commission would have been likely to frustrate the main objective of granting Blunt immunity and securing a confession: that of getting from him as much information as possible to assist other inquiries with which the Security Service was concerned. The overriding consideration was the need to discover as much as possible about the extent of RIS penetration. For this Blunt's co-operation was indispensable.



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- Q.14 Why was Corporal Berry prosecuted and Blunt not?
- A.14 Decisions to prosecute are for the Attorney General. But I would remind the hon. Gentleman that there has never been any evidence which would sustain a charge against Blunt, other than his own confession which was obtained on a promise of immunity from prosecution.
- Q.15 Does the Government accept the identification of the "fifth man" suggested in Boyle's book?
- A.15 This suggestion is new to the security authorities. There is no evidence in their possession to support it. The suggestion is, however, being thoroughly investigated.
- Q.16 Is it true that a senior British Government official stationed in Washington, having spied for the Russians, was detected by the CIA and "turned" by them into a double agent for the CIA, without the knowledge of the British authorities?
- A.16 Answer to be supplied after discussions when paper on ~~xxx~~ is ready
- Q.17 What criminal offences did Blunt commit?
- A.17 That is not for me to say. Only a Court of Law could decide; and the authorities are constrained from preferring any charges in view of the immunity which was granted.
- Q.18 Why has there been a "cover-up" of this matter until it was brought out into the open by publication of the book?
- A.18 I can only answer for the situation as I found it. But the Government gave immunity to Blunt and he has since been a source of useful information; the Government could hardly therefore take the initiative in exposing him. Others who knew or suspected were no doubt deterred by the risk of proceedings for libel.

\* ~~xxx~~ \* Name redacted and retained  
under Section 3(4)

S. Gray

22/7/2016

JOHN HUNT





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Prime Minister

Security

6/5/79

Copy No. 1 of 3 Copies

Ref. A09495

PRIME MINISTER

Copied to  
Security  
Hall's file

Security of the Secret Services

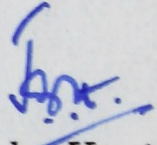
I had been waiting until you had settled in to tell you the story about the Fourth Man and also about certain unsubstantiated allegations of penetration by Russian intelligence of the Security Service in the 1950s and 1960s: but since you will be seeing the Heads of MI5 and MI6 tomorrow you should perhaps be aware of the situation in advance, even if you do not have time to study these papers in detail.

2. The Fourth Man is in any case likely to become a matter of public interest during the summer with the publication of two books:

- (a) "The Russian Connection" by 'Richard Deacon' (G.D. McCormick).
- (b) An unnamed book by Andrew Boyle.

3. Both could cause embarrassment, since they will lead to the identity (but not actually name) a Russian spy known to Burgess, Maclean and Philby, who served in the Security Service 1940-45 and has had a distinguished artistic career since. He is Sir Anthony Blunt, who was Surveyor of The King's/Queen's Pictures from 1945 to 1972 and maintained a connection with the Royal Pictures and Drawings until 1978.

4. A paper about investigations into the security of the secret services is attached at Annex 1 and a more detailed paper about Blunt is at Annex 2. A possible statement, with notes for supplementaries, for use if and when the Blunt story becomes public knowledge is already in draft.

  
(John Hunt)

8th May, 1979





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Annex 1


Investigation of Russian Penetration of the Secret Services

In September 1945 two events caused the Security Service to initiate investigation into the possibility that there was Russian penetration of their own service and the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS). Firstly a Soviet Military Intelligence Service (GRU) cypher clerk named GOUZENKO defected in Ottawa. He identified many GRU spies in Canada and he gave a vague indication of a well-placed GRU spy in Intelligence in London. Secondly a Soviet diplomat in Istanbul named VOLKOV offered to defect for a reward of £50,000 and produced a list of information he said he could provide. As a result of PHILBY's treachery he was removed by the Russians before he could defect, but his proffered information included indications of the identity of seven Russian agents in the "special services".

2. The investigation did not produce results and it was not until a joint Anglo-American operation penetrated Russian war-time cyphers that progress was made in identifying some Russian spies, notably FUCHS in 1949, the United States spies, Mr. and Mrs. ROSENBERG, and GREENGLASS in 1950 and MACLEAN, the Foreign Office spy in 1951. In May 1951 MACLEAN had been warned by PHILBY (then SIS representative in Washington) through BURGESS that he was under close investigation. When he and BURGESS defected to Moscow, PHILBY in whose house BURGESS had lived while serving in the Embassy in Washington, immediately came under suspicion and was interrogated. He made no admissions but was invited to resign. At the same time Mr (now Sir) Anthony BLUNT, who had been a war-time Security Service officer (1940-45) and by then occupied the post of Surveyor of The King's Pictures in the Royal Household, was reported by an acquaintance to have been a Soviet agent in 1937 along with BURGESS. He was immediately put under investigation but there was no usable evidence to support the allegation and, though he was questioned 11 times over the next 13 years he did not admit to working for the Russians.

3. In 1956 Mr. Marcus Lipton MP asked a PQ about PHILBY's activities as a Soviet agent. No direct evidence at that time could be brought against PHILBY and he was given a public clearance by the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Macmillan, and was found a job in Beirut for the Observer newspaper.



  
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4. In April 1962 a defector from the KGB named GOLITSYN gave second-hand information about a group of important spies who had known each other before the war at Cambridge University and had in war-time obtained posts in the Foreign Office or secret Services. They included BURGESS and MACLEAN and a head of Counter Intelligence (GOLITSYN did not know PHILBY's name). This information was supplemented in June 1962 by a report from a Jewess whom PHILBY had tried to recruit for the Russians in 1938 and who now reported the fact because she was offended by PHILBY's anti-Israeli reporting for the Observer in Beirut. PHILBY was interviewed in Beirut in January 1963 in the hope of gaining further intelligence and in two interviews admitted spying for the Russians between 1938 and 1945. He fled before attending a third interview. It was soon clear that he worked for the Russians until 1951 and again from 1956 to 1963.

5. Later in 1963 an American named Michael STRAIGHT, who was being vetted by the FBI for an arts post on the White House Staff, confessed that he had been recruited for the Russians in 1938 by BLUNT. For internal American reasons this confession was not used to charge STRAIGHT and for the same reasons could not be used to charge BLUNT in the United Kingdom. Permission was therefore sought from the Attorney General (Sir John Hobson) to offer BLUNT immunity from prosecution in return for information. This was done in April 1964 and from then until 1974 BLUNT provided information about his own activity in the service of the Russians during war-time, when he passed a great deal of material to them, and about others whom he knew or believed to have worked for the KGB or GRU before or during the war. The Blunt case is dealt with more fully in Annex 2.

6. When PHILBY defected to Moscow his third, American, wife was interviewed by a Security Service officer and said that he had become very nervous in mid-1962 and had begun drinking very heavily again. It was inferred therefore that he had received warning from someone in the Security Service that he was again under investigation and that he would probably be interviewed. At the relevant time this proposal was known to only five senior officers in the Security Service. Only two of these had long enough service and good enough





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access to information to fit the earlier indications of penetration. They were the Director General (Sir Roger Hollis) and his Deputy (Mr. G.R. Mitchell). Moreover the defector GOLITSYN whose opinions then commanded general respect had been emphasising his own conviction that Western secret Services were penetrated at a very senior level. In this dilemma the investigating officer sought the help of the Chief of SIS, Sir Dick White (who was previously Director General of the Security Service) who advised him to investigate Mitchell. With Hollis' authority an investigation was conducted over a period of two years in the course of which Mitchell, for reasons unconnected with the enquiry, resigned and went into retirement. No evidence was found at any stage to show that he was or had ever been a spy.

7. In late 1965 Sir Roger Hollis retired at 60. It was then proposed that since no evidence had been found against Mitchell, Hollis should himself be investigated. After some delay an investigation was undertaken which included over fifty interviews of colleagues and acquaintances who had known him during the previous forty years. No evidence was found that incriminated him. Both men were eventually interviewed, Mitchell in 1969 and Hollis in 1971. Again no evidence was discovered which incriminated either. Further notes on these two cases are appended.

8. In 1965 a joint SIS/Security Service Working Party was established (and remains in being) to consider and review the progress of investigations into penetration of British Intelligence. When the two principal investigations of Mitchell and Hollis were completed, all leads indicating possible penetration were reviewed and categorised. There were about one hundred of them and half were found to have been provided by the defector GOLITSYN. The review eliminated those leads attributable to known spies e.g. PHILBY, BLUNT, BURGESS and those no longer susceptible of investigation (e.g. because sources and witnesses were dead or relevant papers destroyed). The residue of leads still meriting and susceptible of investigation was reduced to five by 1973 and to one by 1976. This sole remaining lead is still being pursued.

9. During 1974 it was decided that in cases involving the investigation of officers who were well-known to the heads of either Service an independent assessor should see the papers, to satisfy himself that the investigations had been



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vigorously and impartially conducted and report as appropriate to the Secretary of the Cabinet. Lord Trend, the former Secretary of the Cabinet who had great experience in these matters, agreed to act as assessor and continues in that role.

10. The arrangements for independent assessment were made mainly to obtain an impartial view of the conduct of internal investigations but partly to answer persistent criticism by an SIS officer \* ~~~~~ \* who, over the years between 1973 and 1978 sent a number of communications to the Heads of both SIS and the Security Service alleging misconduct of the investigations. When his views were not accepted, he appealed to the Prime Minister (Mr. Wilson). Lord Trend was asked to review the investigations into the cases of Mitchell and Hollis and after a very full examination in May 1975 he reported that he agreed with the earlier findings by the investigators that there was no evidence which clearly indicated that either man was a spy. He also found that the only respect in which the investigation could be faulted was the delay in investigating Hollis. \* ~~~~~ \* was seen by Lord Trend and later by the Home Secretary (Mr. Jenkins). The papers were also seen by two Prime Ministers (Mr. Wilson and Mr. Callaghan) and they both agreed that \* ~~~~~ \* had produced no evidence which called for further investigation.

11. The treason of BLUNT is known to a number of people in Fleet Street and at Cambridge and is likely to become a matter of public comment with the publication of a book by Andrew BOYLE in October 1979 to be serialised in the Observer in September. This will recount the earlier history of the Cambridge spies BURGESS, MACLEAN and PHILBY and though it will not name BLUNT (for fear of libel proceedings) will probably give sufficient detail to enable the initiated to identify him.

Current enquiries and assessment

12. Several investigations have been carried out in recent years by the Security Service. There is constant monitoring in both Services of their recruitment and agent operations in order to prevent penetration. There is no current evidence of penetration in either Service (the latest indication is over 20 years old).

Security Service

May 1979

\* ~~~~~ \* Names deleted and retained under Section 3(u)

OlWayland

11 March 2014



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APPENDIX A

G R MITCHELL (Code-name PETERS)

The case for investigation was derived from the investigation of PHILBY in 1962. PHILBY was named by Flora SOLOMON in the summer of 1962 as the man who had in 1938 tried to recruit her to work for the RIS. He was already being investigated as a candidate for a spy indicated by information from the defector GOLITSYN.

2. It seemed from various indications (nervousness, drink etc) that PHILBY was aware long before he was interviewed of the fact that he was under investigation and was to be interrogated in Beirut (and that he consequently defected before the interrogation could be satisfactorily completed). Few people in the Security Service knew this. Of these the candidate chosen, apparently partly because of his socialist views, was the Deputy Director General, MITCHELL. Since he was in the Security Service in 1945, he also qualified as a candidate for the postulated spy whom the Russians needed for continuity when they acquiesced in BLUNT's plans to retire from the Security Service in 1945.

3. An investigation was mounted in 1963-64 using technical aids and surveillance as well as interviews with persons who had known MITCHELL well and several 'Barium Meal'\*operations. Although several pieces of unusual behaviour were observed, which at first excited suspicion, no indication of espionage was obtained at any time. The investigation was re-opened in 1968 and a number of persons including MITCHELL were interviewed. It was concluded that there was no evidence or even an indication that he was ever a spy.

\*ie provision of a piece of interesting intelligence to a suspected spy in the hope of observing a reaction.

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APPENDIX B

Sir Roger HOLLIS (Code-name DRAT)

The case for investigation consisted of:

- a. A report in 1954 by the defector PETROV quoting RAZIN (a senior and successful NKVD officer) in 1943 that at that time there was operating in London a penetration agent who was a career officer and had access to files for Russian officers.
  - b. The reference in a decyphered Russian message of 21.9.45 to a "valuable agent network" in British Intelligence including three agents codenamed JOHNSON, STANLEY and HICKS (the latter two being identified from other evidence as PHILBY and probably BURGESS). "JOHNSON" was at that date said to be absent "on a mission". This was true of both HOLLIS and BLUNT. It was argued in 1968 that BLUNT was ruled out because he was about to retire from MI5 and was therefore no longer of continuing interest to the Russians.
  - c. A statement by VOLKOV, the NKVD official who tried to defect in Istanbul in September 1945 that he would give us details of seven RIS agents in the Special Services including the "acting head of a counter-intelligence directorate". HOLLIS was then in charge of F Division concerned with Communists and Russian espionage.
  - d. The postulate of a second high-grade spy in the Security Service, since BLUNT was allowed by the RIS to leave in 1945.
2. It was believed that only HOLLIS qualified as a candidate on all four counts. Moreover there was much about his pre-war life which required explanation, including
- a. Association at Oxford and later with Claud COCKBURN, Maurice RICHARDSON and Archie LYALL who had left-wing views and the first of whom was probably an RIS agent.

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- b. The uncertainty of HOLLIS' pre-war career particularly after he left China where he worked for British American Tobacco in 1936.
3. Finally he was a candidate for the supposed leak of our investigation of PHILBY in 1962.
4. An investigation was carried out during the years 1968-71. No technical coverage was used at HOLLIS' home because of special local difficulties but more than fifty interviews were carried out, including two with HOLLIS himself. No information was discovered to confirm the supposition of espionage; but there remained some reason to doubt that HOLLIS had been entirely frank about his life during the years 1937-39.
5. HOLLIS died in 1973; no evidence has come to light since then, from people who might previously have been inhibited by the law on defamation, to show that he was a spy.
6. Reappraisal of the four counts in paragraph 1 shows that:
  - a. RAZIN's spy was most probably BLUNT. The reason that RAZIN mentioned the London spy was that he was able both to draw the MI5 files for Russians and to arrange for surveillance of them. The latter was one of BLUNT's duties.
  - b. The three agents in the "valuable agent net-work" were clearly inter-conscious and had been run by a single Russian controller. We know this to be true of BLUNT, BURGESS and PHILBY. HOLLIS was for much of the war working at Blenheim and had less opportunity for regular contacts with the other two or the Russians.
  - c. The "acting head of a counter-intelligence directorate" could, depending on the original date of VOLKOV's information, equally apply to PHILBY.
  - d. If there was a spy in place to succeed BLUNT, it could have been anyone who remained in the Service after 1945; there is nothing to point specifically at HOLLIS.

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3.

7. Finally re-appraisal of the "leak" of our investigation to PHILBY in 1962 shows that his nervousness could reasonably be explained by the KGB's damage assessment of GOLITSYN's defection and their consequent warning to PHILBY that he might be at risk of exposure or reprisal.

APRIL 1979

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Sir Anthony BLUNT

Case History

Anthony Frederick BLUNT was born in 1907. He was educated at Marlborough and Trinity College, Cambridge, where he remained as a don until 1937. He then joined the Warburg Institute in London and in 1939 was appointed Deputy Director of the Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London.

2. In August 1939 BLUNT enlisted and was commissioned in the Intelligence Corps. In July 1940 he joined the Security Service where he served until October 1945, when he returned to the Courtauld Institute, of which he was Director and also became Surveyor of The King's Pictures. From 1947 to 1972 he was also Professor of the History of Art at the University of London. He retired from the post of Surveyor of The Queen's Pictures in September 1972 but remained in the Household as Adviser for The Queen's Pictures and Drawings, then Adviser on the Drawings only until 1974. He resigned a residual honorary consultancy in November 1978.

3. BLUNT was a friend of PHILBY and BURGESS at Cambridge and like them moved in a circle where Marxist sympathies were openly held. After BURGESS and MACLEAN's defection in May 1951 he, like PHILBY, came under suspicion; he was also the subject of an allegation made to the Security Service by the writer Goronwy REES that in about 1937 BURGESS had told him that he (BURGESS) was a Comintern agent, and BLUNT was working for him in the same capacity. BLUNT was interviewed on eleven occasions over a period of years in the course of efforts to clear up this allegation and the other suspicions about him. He made no admissions of performing any services for the Russians and said that he was unaware that BURGESS was working for the Comintern; he had understood before the war that BURGESS was an agent of British Intelligence and had given his assistance in that belief. Efforts to obtain, by other means, information which would establish whether or not BLUNT had wittingly acted as a Soviet agent were unsuccessful.

4. In the early 1960's an important KGB defector to the Americans, GOLITSYN, provided a great deal of information about Russian espionage in Western countries. In dealing with Britain he spoke inter alia of an extensive



espionage group recruited in the 1930s and which was said to have five founding members. Members of this network, to which BURGESS belonged, were aware of each other's activities and the defector believed that through it the Russians had achieved serious penetration of British Intelligence. In the detailed investigation which followed, the case of PHILBY was reopened, leading to his confession in Beirut in January 1963 and subsequent flight. The defector provided no information which implicated BLUNT but subsequently an American, Michael Whitney STRAIGHT, volunteered to the FBI, who passed the information to the British authorities, that before the war BLUNT had recruited him to be "economist and adviser on policy matters for the International" and that he believed BLUNT had tried to recruit others. STRAIGHT confessed to the FBI that he had spied for the Russian Intelligence Service whilst working in the State Department and the Department of the Interior from about 1938 to 1940. He was not prosecuted and his evidence could not be used for a prosecution of BLUNT. STRAIGHT was appointed Deputy Chairman of the Arts Council of the United States under the Nixon Administration.

5. In view of BLUNT's former career in British Intelligence and his friendship with BURGESS and PHILBY it was concluded that it was essential to try once more to establish the truth about his role and in particular whether he answered to the allegations relating to penetration of British Intelligence, or could contribute to their solution. It was expected that he would maintain his denial of any guilty involvement, unless he were offered some inducement to confess. An approach was therefore made to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

6. On 15 April 1964, the Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions (acting in place of the Director, who had recently died) wrote to the then Attorney General, Sir John Hobson. The Attorney was informed that STRAIGHT had made an allegation that BLUNT had worked for the Russians and that it was the intention of the Security Service to interrogate BLUNT for the purpose of obtaining information from him about others who might still be a danger. The Deputy Director told the Attorney that he had authorised the investigating officers, if they felt it necessary in order to obtain the information, to assure BLUNT that there would be no criminal proceedings against him in relation to matters which



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had occurred 20 or more years ago. The Attorney General replied the following day saying that he had no comment to make on what the Deputy Director had authorized.

7. BLUNT was interviewed on 23 April 1964, and was confronted with the information given by STRAIGHT. This produced no admission from BLUNT and, indeed, he described it as pure fantasy. The interviewers then put it to BLUNT that if it was fear that deterred him from speaking he could give him "an absolute assurance that no action would be taken against him if he now told the truth". BLUNT confessed then and both then and in subsequent interviews at which the assurance was repeated, he provided much useful information.

8. In his initial confession he said that he had been recruited for the Third International by BURGESS in the 1930s to work for the RIS. He said that his regular dealings with the RIS ended shortly after his departure from the Security Service in October 1945 but he admitted that he had known of MACLEAN's intended defection in 1951, and had put BURGESS in touch with an RIS officer at the time.

9. In later interviews BLUNT admitted to occasional meetings with RIS officers between 1945 and 1947, when he acted as a courier for BURGESS, and on one occasion between 1951 and 1956 when he assisted PHILBY in contacting the RIS. He also explained his role as a talent spotter for the RIS in the 1930s and spoke in detail of the cases of three undergraduates (including STRAIGHT) whom he had recruited for the RIS at that time. In addition he described BURGESS' work for the RIS and his recruiting activities on its behalf.

10. A Security Service research team, which was set up to investigate the group of five referred to by GOLITSYN and related cases, had considerable success aided by BLUNT's information in identifying personalities and activities of the network. In one notable instance, where his information and assistance played a significant part, a senior Admiralty scientist was removed from a sensitive post after it had been concluded (although it could not be conclusively proved) that he had been recruited for the RIS by BURGESS in the 1930s.

11. However, as more details were uncovered the interrogators felt that while the information BLUNT had given in his early interviews had been substantially true, he had not told all he could. Efforts to extract additional information from



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him have been largely unsuccessful. BLUNT's reasons for withholding (he does not himself admit to it) are not known; nor is it clear that the information he is keeping back has security significance. The conduct of his dealings with interviewing officers has throughout been one of apparently trying to assist the Security Service in tracing unidentified Soviet agents while avoiding any statement in circumstances which might lead to proceedings against others which might involve him. He may still be protecting friends.

12. There remains the possibility that BLUNT retains some loyalty to the Russians and may even be under a degree of Soviet guidance and control. During an investigation which has lasted with occasional breaks for over 20 years this has been the subject of close examination, but with negative results.

13. The decision not to prosecute BLUNT was reviewed in 1972 by the then Attorney General, now Lord Rawlinson, who confirmed that the public interest lay in taking no action. In 1974 the next Attorney General (Mr. Silkin) considered the matter again and saw no reason to differ; he was also satisfied that nothing had occurred since 1972 which would justify a prosecution. The only firm evidence against BLUNT is his confession which, in view of the immunity given in order to obtain it, would be usable against him.

The forthcoming book

14. Mr. Andrew BOYLE who has written several previous biographies (of Group Captain Cheshire, Trenchard, Brendan Bracken and Erskine Childers) has recently completed the draft of a book about the Cambridge spies. The probable content of the book has become clear. For legal reasons BLUNT is unlikely to be named as the "fourth man" but it is likely that he will be sufficiently described for any intelligent reader to identify him. BOYLE's book may also suggest that there was a "fifth man", a British-born spy for the RIS who was later "turned" by the CIA and used against MACLEAN, BURGESS and PHILBY and was then rewarded with United States citizenship and a lucrative United States Government post. This story, which is believed to concern a Dr. W.B. MANN, is almost certainly untrue but is still being checked out with the Americans. The book after recounting the now well-known history of BURGESS, MACLEAN and PHILBY and their close friendship with BLUNT, will imply that in 1951 BLUNT, who still had social



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contact with former Security Service colleagues, told BURGESS on Friday, 25th May, 1951, that MACLEAN was to be interrogated on Monday, 28th May, and that this was the reason for their very sudden decision to defect. There is no evidence to support this suggestion. BLUNT did indeed have occasional social contact at this period with the Deputy Director General of the Security Service, Mr. G. M. Liddell, which the latter recorded, but there is no record of any such contact between 17th May when the first proposal was made to interview and 29th May when it became certain that BURGESS and MACLEAN had defected. Moreover the decision to interview MACLEAN was taken at a meeting at the Foreign Office chaired by the Foreign Secretary on 24th May 1951 and the date was set for the week beginning 17th June, because of Mrs. MACLEAN's advanced pregnancy, which was expected to end then.

15. Mr. BOYLE's book may also imply that BLUNT confessed, implicated PHILBY and was "pardoned" shortly after he was knighted in 1956. The confession was in fact in 1964 by which time PHILBY had defected.

Damage assessment

16. Between 1936 when BLUNT was recruited into the Service of the Soviet Union and the outbreak of war when he left Cambridge to join the Army, his task was talent-spotting and recruitment in the university. His contribution to the infiltration of Soviet agents into our society was considerable.

17. While a member of the Security Service (June 1940 to October 1945) by his own account he passed to the RIS any information that came his way which he considered to be of possible interest to them. It must be assumed that this included information on his colleagues and others in Government service, of a kind which the Russians might hope to exploit then or later.

18. For his first three months' service BLUNT was concerned with vetting of military personnel and civil servants and he had only limited access to other information of value to the Russians. In October 1940, however, he became personal assistant to the Director of the Counter-Espionage and Counter-Subversion Division and at the end of that year he moved to the Counter-Espionage section where he remained until he left the Service five years later. In this section he dealt with material concerned with counter-espionage operations



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against the German, Italian and Japanese Intelligence Services, and was particularly concerned with the use made by those Services of neutral diplomats, including Swiss, Swedes, Spaniards and Portuguese. He handled reports from agents, from decyphered diplomatic cables, and from telephone intercepts directed against diplomats serving in the United Kingdom and he was engaged in operations against neutrals' diplomatic bags. He had close liaison with the SIS. He was involved in double agent operations. He would have learned a certain amount about SOE operations. He handled files on some Russians living in or visiting the United Kingdom and would have had access to files on other Russians. He selected targets for surveillance operations. He drafted fortnightly reports on the work of all sections in the Service for submission to the Prime Minister.

19. During BLUNT's first nine months in the Service when the Soviet Union were in relations with Germany some of the information BLUNT provided may have been passed on to the Germans. This could have led to action against people who were helping this country, though we have no evidence of this. After the Russians were drawn into the war they would have been receiving from him information about our war effort which we would have not wished them to have, and information which may well have been useful to them in their longer-term plans for undermining the West. We know of one example of a Russian suffering as a result of BLUNT's activities: BLUNT revealed that a Russian source was passing information to SIS and was subsequently told by the Russians that a Soviet departmental official had been "dealt with".

20. In summary, whereas we know that people like PHILBY and BLAKE sent many men to their death, we have no evidence that BLUNT did that, and in the circumstances in which he was operating it seems unlikely. This does not mean that we can regard him as a traitor of minor importance: his disservice to the country was grave.

### Other associates of BLUNT

21. A note on PHILBY, BURGESS and MACLEAN is attached as Appendix A. Some of BLUNT's other associates are discussed below.



John CAIRNCROSS

22. At Cambridge BLUNT talent-spotted John CAIRNCROSS, who worked as an RIS agent from 1936, when he joined the Foreign Office, until 1952, when he came under suspicion as a contact of BURGESS. CAIRNCROSS was from 1940 to 1942 Private Secretary to Lord Hankey, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Paymaster General. In 1942 and 1943 he worked at the Government Code and Cypher School at Bletchley and from 1943 to 1945 was in SIS. From 1945 to 1952 he worked at the Treasury (with a secondment of six months to the Ministry of Supply in 1951). In 1952 he resigned from United Kingdom Government Service after he had come under suspicion and from that time he worked in a variety of academic and administrative posts abroad until 1971. In 1964 he was interviewed in the United States and confessed to having been an RIS agent throughout his career. He could not be deported under American law and refused to comply with a formal invitation to return to this country and make a statement under caution. He is now living in Rome. We do not think Boyle's book will mention him.

Sir Dennis PROCTER

23. PROCTER met PHILBY, BLUNT and BURGESS at Cambridge first in 1929 or 1930 and has said that either BLUNT or PHILBY introduced him to Marxism about that time. He said in 1966 that he was still a Marxist. PROCTER served in the Treasury from 1930 to 1950. He then became Managing Director of a shipping firm but returned to the Treasury in 1953. From 1958 to 1965 he was Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Fuel and Power, then he retired. He was a close friend of BURGESS and has said that he discussed official matters freely with BURGESS before and during the war. He was and still is friendly with Blunt. We do not think Boyle's book will mention him.

Goronwy REES

24. Goronwy REES was at New College, Oxford, from 1928 to 1931 and then became a Fellow of All Souls. He worked as a journalist on the Manchester Guardian and the Spectator from 1932 until the outbreak of war, when he joined the Army and served in Intelligence. From July 1947 to May 1951 he acted as a



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part-time consultant in the Political Section of SIS. In 1953 he became Principal of the University College of Wales and since his resignation from that post in 1957 he has been a freelance writer and journalist.

25. REES has said he first met BURGESS in about 1932 and they remained close friends until 1951 apart from a disagreement over BURGESS' apparent swing to Fascism between 1935 and 1937. REES held left-wing views but is not known ever to have joined the Communist Party.

26. In May 1951, very shortly after the defection of BURGESS and MACLEAN, REES volunteered to the Security Service the information that in 1937 BURGESS told him that he was working for a secret branch of the Comintern and that BLUNT was one of his sources of information. REES said that BURGESS asked him to help in the work, and that he had agreed to co-operate but was never asked to provide specific information, though he discussed with BURGESS whatever he knew. He had broken off the arrangement in 1939 at the time of the Russo-German Pact. REES said subsequently that BLUNT had tried to dissuade him from telling his story to the Security Service.

27. REES has in newspaper articles (1956), a book (1972) and a TV interview (1978) told the story of his association with BURGESS and has told many people in Fleet Street and at Cambridge about his suspicions of BLUNT. It is clear from the context that REES is the source of many of the allegations and inferences about the "Fourth Man" in BOYLE's book.

### The Bentinck Street Associates

28. When BLUNT returned from France in the summer of 1940, he stayed at Lord ROTHSCHILD's flat at 5 Bentinck Street, W1, and it was Lord ROTHSCHILD, then a Security Service officer, who recommended him for recruitment. Later in 1940 Lord ROTHSCHILD sublet the flat to BLUNT, who shared it with Tess MAYOR (whom Lord ROTHSCHILD also recommended for recruitment and who became his secretary; they married in 1946 after his divorce) and Pat RAWDON-SMITH (now Lady LLEWELYN-DAVIES). They were joined later by BURGESS when he left SOE and rejoined the BBC in late 1940. Lord ROTHSCHILD, Miss MAYOR, Mrs. RAWDON-SMITH, BLUNT and



BURGESS had all known one another at Cambridge in the mid-1930s. BLUNT and BURGESS remained there until 1945, Mrs. RAWDON-SMITH left in 1943 on marriage to Richard LLEWELYN-DAVIES, who had stayed for a few months in 1942-43.

29. Mr. BOYLE, drawing on information from Goronwy REES, Malcolm MUGGERIDGE and others, is believed to describe the Bentinck Street flat as the scene of drunken orgies (during one of which MACLEAN was homosexually compromised) and of meetings of Communist and sympathetic intellectuals. It is thought that nothing will be said in the book to the detriment of Lord or Lady ROTHSCHILD or of Lord or Lady LLEWELYN-DAVIES but it is possible that others who knew them will elaborate on their apparently close association with BLUNT, especially as BURGESS, Miss MAYOR and Mrs. LLEWELYN-DAVIES were all in late 1945 employed in the Foreign Office. There have been no security worries about Lady Llewelyn-Davies or Lord Rothschild. The latter was of course fully PV'd. Since 1951 both Lord and Lady ROTHSCHILD have volunteered assistance in the Security Service investigations. It was information received through Lord ROTHSCHILD which led to the final identification of PHILBY as a spy. Lord LLEWELYN-DAVIES, though suspected of involvement in the 1930s in the recruitment of the scientist who later joined the Admiralty (see paragraph 10) has denied all connection with the RIS.

Briefing of Ministers

30. Apart from the Attorney General (Hobson) in 1964 Ministers have been consulted on the following occasions.

- (i) At a meeting in February 1964 attended by the Prime Minister (Douglas-Home), Chancellor of the Exchequer (Maudling), Foreign Secretary (Butler), Home Secretary (Brooke) and Attorney General (Hobson) about CAIRNCROSS (see paragraph 22) it is thought that some mention was made of BLUNT's involvement with BURGESS and CAIRNCROSS, although the note of the meeting does not mention Blunt.
- (ii) The Prime Minister (Wilson) and the Home Secretary (Jenkins) were informed about the progress of the BLUNT investigation in 1967. The Home Secretary (Callaghan) was informed of the case in 1968.



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- (iii) The Home Secretary (Maudling) was informed of the case in May 1971.
- (iv) In 1972 the Attorney General (Rawlinson) was consulted.
- (v) In 1973 the Prime Minister (Heath), Home Secretary (Carr) were informed in detail against the likelihood of publicity in case of BLUNT's death.
- (vi) In June 1974 the Attorney General (Silkin) was consulted.
- (vii) In July 1974 the Prime Minister (Wilson), the Lord Chancellor (Elwyn-Jones), Home Secretary (Jenkins) and Attorney General (Silkin) were fully informed.
- (viii) In June 1977 the Prime Minister (Callaghan) and the Home Secretary (Rees) were fully informed.
- (ix) All Home Secretaries from March 1964 to date have signed interception warrants on Blunt..

In addition the Attorney General (Manningham Buller) was informed about the investigation of BLUNT in 1957 before BLUNT was directly implicated and confessed.

— 31. A note on Blunt's connection with the Palace is also attached at Appendix B.



Appendix ABURGESS, PHILBY and MACLEAN

In 1962 the KGB defector GOLITSYN said that in the 1930s there had been a very important spy network in the United Kingdom which originally had five members, all of whom knew each other and had been at the University together. He knew that BURGESS and MACLEAN were members. He thought that the network had expanded beyond the original five and that it still had some sort of existence even after their defection.

2. PHILBY was undoubtedly an original member. The fourth was probably BLUNT, although there remains some doubt as to whether he was an original member. The fifth is still unknown. James KLUGMANN, a life-long Communist from his days at Cambridge and a prominent member of the Cultural Committee of the Communist Party, who worked for the RIS before and during the war, when he was an officer in SOE in Italy, is one of the possible candidates. There is no reason to suppose that BOYLE is aware of GOLITSYN's report. His "discovery" of a "fifth man" is merely coincidental; his candidate has no common background with the known four and can be ruled out as GOLITSYN's fifth man.

3. There were very few Communists at the universities in the 1920s, but in the 1930s the economic slump, the rise of Fascism, the influx of refugee Marxist intellectuals from Europe and the Comintern's switch to United Front tactics, gave a great impetus to Communism among dons and undergraduates. This situation provided the Russian Intelligence Service (RIS) with opportunities which it did not fail to exploit. It was assisted by the fact that some Communist students were instructed by the Party to become "moles", that is to sever overt connections with the Party, in anticipation of employment in the Public Service, when their abilities, reinforced by Communist discipline, were calculated to take them to positions of influence where they could help to create the Revolution from above. The following paragraphs concern BLUNT's immediate companions. PHILBY, BURGESS and MACLEAN all figure largely in BOYLE's book. Though some of this account comes from suspect sources, the general sequence of events is believed to be true.



H A R PHILBY

4. In 1933 PHILBY completed his degree course at Trinity College, Cambridge. Although not a card-holding member of the Communist Party, he had been closely associated with Communist circles at Trinity. Before taking up his career he went to Vienna, ostensibly to improve his German. Through Maurice DOBB, (a Communist then and until he died in 1976) he was provided with the address of Lizzy FRIEDMAN. PHILBY stayed with her in Vienna, married her and brought her back to England in the spring of 1934. Shortly afterwards Lizzy was instrumental in introducing him to a Russian Intelligence Officer who is thought to have recruited him formally for the RIS. In his 1963 confession, which was certainly a mixture of truth and falsehood, PHILBY claimed that he was told to review his friends for other possible recruits. His first candidate was Donald MACLEAN and his second Guy BURGESS. He may have been responsible for other recruitments then or later.

5. When PHILBY returned from Vienna his tutor refused to recommend him for the Indian Civil Service because of his left-wing views. He took up journalism and among other activities became associated with Peter SMOLKA alias SMOLLETT in the formation of a Press Agency. (SMOLKA, an Austrian Jew, was another Russian spy and probably was recruited in Vienna before he came to the United Kingdom. He joined the Ministry of Information in 1939 and was head of its Soviet Relations branch from 1941 to 1945. He has lived in Austria since 1946 and was "The Times" correspondent from 1947 to 1949 before recovering possession of his family's metal-working business).

6. In February 1937 PHILBY went to Spain and later became correspondent for "The Times" on the Franco side. In 1940 he joined SOE and subsequently transferred to SIS and by the end of the war he had become Head of Counter Intelligence. After serving in Turkey, he was in Washington at the time of the MACLEAN investigation. Much of this investigation was concerned with leakages which had occurred while MACLEAN was en poste in Washington from 1944-1948, and PHILBY was privy to it. In 1950 BURGESS was posted to Washington as an ordinary Foreign Service officer and lived in PHILBY's house there. He returned to the United Kingdom in 1951 carrying a warning from



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PHILBY to MACLEAN a few weeks before he and MACLEAN defected. Suspicion fell on PHILBY as the source of the warning and he was made the subject of intensive investigation. He was required to resign from SIS because of his early Communist record but his guilt was not established until 1962. He was then outside the jurisdiction. He was interviewed abroad and made a partial confession. A few days later he fled to Russia.

D D MACLEAN

7. MACLEAN was recruited for the RIS in 1934 shortly before coming down from Trinity Hall, Cambridge, when he was preparing to enter the Foreign Office. As an undergraduate he had been openly left-wing, but after recruitment by the RIS gave no overt sign of Communist views. He operated as a spy throughout a successful career in the Foreign Service, which included postings in Paris, Washington, where he was acting Head of Chancery in 1946, and Cairo. He became the prime suspect in the leakage investigation mentioned above and would have been interrogated if the investigation had not been betrayed by PHILBY. It is not known what MACLEAN did in the way of talent-spotting or recruitment during his espionage career.

G F de M BURGESS

8. BURGESS was a brilliant undergraduate at Trinity College, Cambridge, a convinced Marxist and a member of the Communist Party. After his recruitment by the RIS at the end of 1934 or early 1935 he ceased to be an open Communist. He worked in the BBC from 1936 to 1939 when he joined the section of SIS which later became SOE. From 1941 to 1944 he was again employed by the BBC and then joined the Foreign Office News Department. From 1941 to 1946 he was an outside agent of the Security Service. In October 1947 he became an established member of the Foreign Service (Branch B) and served as personal assistant to the Minister of State, in the Far Eastern Department and finally in the British Embassy, Washington. He was not suspected of being a spy before he defected in 1951.

9. BURGESS had direct access to important secrets in the course of his various employments from 1939 to 1951. In addition he had a very wide circle of friends, many of whom were, as he was, homosexuals. Many of his friends reached high places. He was accepted in intellectual circles in Cambridge and



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London, and particularly at All Souls College, Oxford. There is no doubt that many of his friends were valuable unconscious sources and he was in a position to give very important assistance to the RIS as a talent-spotter. He made some recruitments for the RIS himself, though the full extent of these is unknown. One of them was BLUNT. BURGESS died in Moscow in 1963.



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Blunt and the Palace

Sir Anthony Blunt is a leading authority on art. Before the war he was deputy Director of the Courtauld Institute of Art. He rejoined the Institute on leaving the Security Service in October 1945 and became its Director in 1947. He has also been Professor of the History of Art at the University of London and Slade Professor of Fine Art at both Oxford and Cambridge. In 1945 he was appointed Surveyor of The King's Pictures: he was reappointed to this position (which was unpaid after 1947) on The Queen's accession and held it until 1972. Thereafter he held an honorary position as Adviser for The Queen's Pictures and Drawings until 1978. He was awarded the KCVO in 1956.

Criticism is likely to centre on the continuation of Blunt in a post in the Royal Household after Goronwy Rees made his allegations in 1951, and after his confession in 1964, and on the award of the knighthood to Blunt in 1956. The sequence of events so far as the Palace was concerned is, in summary form, as follows:-

- (i) 1945. Blunt appointed Surveyor of The King's Pictures. No suspicion about him at that time.
  - (ii) 1951. Allegations by Goronwy Rees and retired Foreign Office official. Unsupported by evidence. \* ~~~~~ \*
- Interrogation of Blunt begun. Blunt known to have been an associate of Burgess, who defected with Maclean in 1951. But no grounds for action.
- (iii) 1956. Blunt made KCVO. This honour, invariably given to persons serving in the Royal Household in posts such as Blunt then held, was in the personal gift of The Queen, and was not awarded on the recommendation of the Prime Minister. There was therefore no occasion for consultation about the award, and, so far as the Palace was concerned, no reason to call it in question.
  - (iv) Early 1964. Information received implicating Blunt.
  - (v) April 1964. The Queen's Private Secretary (Sir Michael Adeane) informed by Permanent Under-Secretary, Home Office (Cunningham) and Director General, Security Service (Hollis) and told that Blunt was to be seen and



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invited to confess. It was agreed that Blunt should not be removed from his present post. \* ~~~~~ \*

(vi) Later April 1964. Blunt confessed.

\* ~ \* Passages deleted and closed under  
FOI Exemption.

B. Wayland  
11 March 2014

Against this background it is not too difficult to defend the award of a knighthood to Blunt in 1956. It was an award in the personal gift of The Queen, not made on the Prime Minister's recommendation; it would have caused surprise if he had not got it; and the Palace had no real reason to call it in question. More difficult to defend is the fact that he continued to hold the post of Surveyor of The Queen's Pictures after he had confessed. The decision not to dismiss him, or arrange for his resignation, was taken on the grounds that (i) since Blunt was to be given immunity from prosecution and his case unlikely to become public, it was desirable to avoid taking any action which, by alarming him, might put at risk his willingness to continue to provide information about his contacts, and (ii) he had no access to classified information, nor, any longer, any contacts that would make him a current security risk.

Sir Martin Charteris and later Sir Philip Moore agreed that if necessary it could be said publicly that The Queen's Private Secretary had been kept fully in the picture throughout the episode. It would be in accordance with all precedents to refuse to reveal what passes between The Queen and her Private Secretary.

Prime Minister.

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A specific question will arise when the Blunt is revealed: should he now forfeit his knighthood as a penalty for the treason he has confessed to but not been convicted of. \* ~~~~~

\* ~~~~~  
KRS