



Prime Minister.

A02452

MR WHITMOREmb
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The Prime Minister should be aware of the possibility that a self-confessed Soviet spy, Professor Hambleton, who lives and works in Canada, intends to begin a visit to this country tomorrow.

2. Professor Hambleton is a economist currently working at Laval University in Quebec. He was born in Ottawa, but since his father was British he is a dual national and holds both British and Canadian passports. He was originally interrogated by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in late 1979, when he admitted he had spied for the Russian Intelligence Service for about 30 years. He said that he had not passed any Canadian classified information, and the Canadian Justice Department ruled that there was insufficient evidence to charge him. He has therefore remained at liberty. Furthermore since his original discovery the Canadian authorities have obtained from him, under promise of immunity, further admissions of providing classified information to the Russians while he was employed in the Economic Section of NATO in Paris from 1956 to 1961.

3. He was a PhD student at the London School of Economics from 1961 to 1964 and although the Security Service do not yet know enough about his activities here then to interview him, they are looking into any British connections he may have had in the past or may make during his visit to discover whether his spying involved any British interests. The Canadian authorities have also undertaken to let the Security Service know if they discover anything directly affecting British interests.

4. Hambleton's visit to Britain is expected to last 2 weeks during which he will attend a 3 day academic conference at Exeter. The Security Service have been told by the Home Office that there are no powers under which he can be excluded from this country. Equally, we have no evidence on which he could be charged under the British Official Secrets Act. But it is possible that the Press may notice his presence here (though his case has so far attracted relatively little attention on this side of the Atlantic) and that this may excite interest or possibly Parliamentary Questions.



5. The drafting of replies to Questions which may be asked about Professor Hambleton's visit will of course be dependent on what form they take. But it is likely that Questions would ask to know why Professor Hambleton had been admitted into this country and whether he was a threat to our own security. In either case the Questions would be for the Home Secretary to answer. The replies would be to the effect that the Professor Hambleton is not wanted in this country for any offence, that his presence here is not thought likely to put British security interests at risk, and that Questions relating to his activities in Canada or any confession he may have made there are not matters for the British Government.

6. I am sending copies of this minute to Sir Brian Cubbon and Sir Howard Smith.

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26 June 1980

SECRET



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Security

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

PROFESSOR HAMBLETON

The Prime Minister has seen and noted your minute AO2452 of 26 June 1980 about Professor Hambleton.

I am sending copies of this minute to Sir Brian Cubbon and Sir Howard Smith.

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C. A. WHITMORE

EW

27 June 1980

SECRET